

MAY HEALTH & WELLNESS

READING, MA - While the month of May gifts us with fresh air, singing birds, blooming flowers and much anticipated sunshine, it is also Melanoma Awareness Month, where “No One Fights Alone”. Melanoma is the 6th most common cancer in the U.S. and increasing rapidly. In an effort to help residents prevent skin cancer, the Town of Reading announces that two sunscreen dispensers will be deployed at area parks later this month.

Risk factors include fair skin, history of sunburn, family history, or a weakened immune system. To help reduce the risk of developing melanoma, dermatologists advise avoiding mid-day sun, wearing sunscreen year-round, and becoming familiar with your own skin so that you will notice any changes. According to the American Melanoma Foundation, 80% of lifetime sun damage occurs in childhood. The first sign of melanoma is often a mole that changes size, shape, color or that bleeds or itches.

Anyone is susceptible to melanoma, but, when found early, the cure rate is nearly 100 percent. If allowed to grow, it can spread quickly and become deadly.

The Reading Health Department strongly encourages all residents to adopt a pro-active approach with skin protection. Follow the label instructions on all sunscreens. It's one thing to provide education to the public about the dangers from the sun, but The Reading Health Department has taken the next step by providing two sunscreen dispensaries.

The Health Department received a grant for two sunscreen dispensers from The Melanoma Foundation of New England. The sunscreen dispensers will be located on Bancroft Street by the tennis courts and between the turf fields of the High School.

Please contact the Reading Health Department with any questions or concerns 781-942-9061.

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