

# Melanoma Facts

## **Most Americans are unaware of the seriousness of melanoma.**

**The median lifespan for patients with advanced melanoma is less than one year.**

- If not caught early, melanoma is known to be the most deadly of all skin cancers. Melanoma can be successfully removed and monitored by regular skin screenings in its early stages. However, the disease is deadly in its most advanced stages as few treatment options exist.
- One in 50 Americans has a lifetime risk of developing melanoma, and nearly 69,000 are expected to be diagnosed in the United States with the disease in 2009, resulting in an estimated 8,650 deaths. This means that ...
  - Every eight minutes, someone in the United States is diagnosed with melanoma.
  - Melanoma claims the life of one American every hour.
- Melanoma primarily affects individuals in the prime of life. The mean age for diagnosis of melanoma is 50, while for many other cancers it is 65 to 70 years old.

## **Melanoma is the fastest growing cancer in the United States and worldwide.**

- The American Cancer Society estimates that the risk of developing invasive melanoma in the United States is 1 in 41 men and 1 in 61 women.
- The incidence of people under 30 developing melanoma is increasing faster than any other demographic group, soaring by 50 percent in young women since 1980.
- Melanoma is the most common form of cancer for young adults 25- to 29-years-old and the second most common cancer in adolescents and young adults 15- to 29-years-old.
- Although melanoma is most common in Caucasians, melanoma can strike men and women of all ages, all races and all skin types.

## **More research is needed to find the pathways to a cure.**

- More research is needed to understand the unique biology of the many different types of melanoma and to develop effective treatments.
- Fewer scientists are conducting research into melanoma; in part due to the fact melanoma research is woefully under funded.
- Increased funding, especially at the federal levels, is critical to finding a cure and improving current treatment strategies.