Getting Serious About Staying Sun-Safe

A full-body skin exam was never on Carol Ciminelli’s “to-do” list, at least not until two years ago when the 74-year-old avid sun bather noticed what she thought was a suspicious-looking mole on her arm.

She mentioned it in passing to her mail carrier who had been treated for melanoma in the past. “He told me if you’re concerned about it, you should do something about it,” recalled the Amityville resident, who as a teen sunbathed coated in baby oil and armed with a reflector that often resulted in blistering sunburns.

The grandmother of four scheduled a consultation with a dermatologist who biopsied the mole. The doctor also biopsied a second mole on the back of the same arm that she deemed “suspicious-looking.”

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Mount Sinai South Nassau surgical oncologist Eric Seitelman, MD, and melanoma patient Carol Ciminelli at her bi-annual check-up.

Prevent Melanoma and Practice Sun Safety

Lower your risk of contracting skin cancer by following these helpful tips:

- **Apply a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher.** A broad-spectrum sunscreen provides protection from UVA and UVB rays. Reapply every two hours after swimming or sweating.

- **Wear sun-protective clothing** and a wide-brimmed hat to shade your face, head, ears, and neck.

- **Avoid tanning beds.** Ultraviolet light from tanning beds can cause skin cancer and premature skin aging.

- **Perform a head-to-toe skin exam every three months to detect skin cancer early.** Also, see a board certified dermatologist for an annual skin exam, or with more urgency if you notice new, suspicious looking spots on your skin or an existing growth that has changed in appearance, itches, or bleeds.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; American Academy of Dermatology.
A week later, Ms. Ciminelli, who has no family history of melanoma, was relieved to find out that the mole she thought was “funny-looking” was not cancerous. However, she was devastated to learn the other mole she thought nothing of was melanoma. “I had this growth for at least 10 years,” she said. “I thought it was a bruise.”

Her dermatologist referred her to Eric Seitelman, MD, FACS, a surgical oncologist at Mount Sinai South Nassau’s Melanoma Program, who reassured her and performed a wide excision of the melanoma along with sentinel lymph node mapping (to determine if the cancer has spread) and a biopsy in early January 2020.

Nearly 100,000 Americans will be diagnosed with melanoma this year, and more than 7,600 will die of the disease, according to the American Cancer Society. “Melanoma is more common than people think and can be dangerous. However, dermatologists do a wonderful job screening patients with an annual full-body skin check. Surgeons are able to effectively treat melanoma with minimally invasive techniques. We have many immunotherapies at our disposal for even advanced melanoma that we didn’t have a few years ago,” said Dr. Seitelman, who is part of a multidisciplinary team who diagnoses and treats melanoma and other cancers. “Luckily, we caught her cancer in its earliest stage.”

For Ms. Ciminelli, sunbathing is no longer a favorite pastime. And when she joins her husband on walks around their neighborhood, she wears a broad-spectrum sunscreen, a wide-brimmed hat, and sometimes a long-sleeved, sun-protective shirt.

Every six months she sees a dermatologist for a full-body skin exam and Dr. Seitelman, who checks her to ensure that her cancer has not recurred. “Ms. Ciminelli’s prognosis is excellent,” he said. “She has a very low risk of recurrence or metastasis.”

She regrets not being proactive about regular skin check-ups and urges others to be more mindful of their health. “Melanoma can happen to anyone at any time,” said the retired library assistant. “Do your head-to-toe self-assessments every three months and see a dermatologist for a skin exam every year. I wish I had started sooner. There was a lot of neglect. Don’t trust your own eyes to try to determine if a growth looks suspicious. You don’t have a trained eye. Only a doctor can tell you with any certainty.”

The Melanoma Program at Mount Sinai South Nassau

The Melanoma Program at Mount Sinai South Nassau brings together a skilled multidisciplinary team to diagnose, treat, and care for patients with melanoma and other skin cancers. The program includes experts in medical and radiation oncology, plastic surgery, pathology, and radiology. Nurse navigators with dedicated knowledge and skills in the treatment of melanoma help guide patients through their continuum of care. To schedule an appointment, call 516-632-3350.
If you are in your local library to browse the shelves for a book or media to borrow, why not borrow a blood pressure cuff, too? Mount Sinai South Nassau has partnered with your local library and is offering ways to manage your health at home. As part of the American Heart Association’s Healthier Long Island Initiative, Mount Sinai South Nassau’s nursing team will show you the proper way to take your blood pressure and record your readings. After 30 days, your at-home readings will be reviewed with you by a professional licensed nurse. To see when the program will be offered in your community, call 516-377-5333.

Janice Campbell, RN, Coordinator, Parent-Child Education and Lactation Center at Mount Sinai South Nassau, is the recipient of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) and the DAISY Foundation award for advancing nursing practice through innovation, dedication to evidence-based practices, and commitment to the safe care of patients, staff, and community. This national award is highly competitive. Nearly 15,000 nurses and nurse-led teams, first honored within their own organizations from throughout the country, were eligible for the 2022 DAISY Awards. Ms. Campbell is a long-standing member of Mount Sinai South Nassau’s nursing research and Evidence-Based Practice Council and a former nursing research fellow. Under her leadership, the hospital participates in the New York State Birth Equity Improvement Project, which aims to improve perinatal outcomes for Black birthing women in the community. As a founder of We Breastfeed, Black Breastfeeding Coalition of New York, she strives to improve health indicators, such as patient safety and health outcomes of Black women and children, through breastfeeding education and support. The Boston-based IHI is a not-for-profit organization that advances better outcomes in health and health systems around the world. The DAISY Foundation honors the exceptional efforts of individual nurses and clinical teams to deliver compassionate, patient-centered care.

Mount Sinai South Nassau Nurse Practitioner Dorothy Nanong-Roja measures Mamie Eng’s blood pressure at the Henry Waldinger Memorial Library in Valley Stream. Ms. Eng is participating in the hospital’s Library Loaner Blood Pressure program in collaboration with the American Heart Association’s Healthier Long Island Initiative.

Free community screenings include blood pressure, BMI (Body Mass Index), balance testing, sleep assessment, and head and neck screening.

For more information, call Mount Sinai South Nassau’s Department of Community Education at (516) 377-5333.

Start Your Journey to Wellness

Janice Campbell, RN, is the recipient of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement and the DAISY Foundation award.

Mount Sinai South Nassau Nurse Wins National Award for Promoting Breastfeeding

SAVE THE DATE
HEALTH FAIR
LONG BEACH BOARDWALK
SUNDAY, JUNE 26, 2022
10 AM–2 PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION, call
Mount Sinai South Nassau’s Department of Community Education at (516) 377-5333.
Healthy Recipe

Protein-Packed Vegan Lentil Burger

Ready for a tasty, high-fiber treat? These nutritious and hearty meatless patties can be cooked on the grill at your next barbecue or sautéed in a fry pan. Pair them with the suggested toppings below or with the condiments and veggies of your choice.

Ingredients:

- ¾ cup brown lentils, rinsed, strained, and picked through
- 1¾ cups plus 1 tablespoon low-sodium vegetable broth or water
- 2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 large red onion, half finely chopped and half thinly sliced
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 8 ounces fresh baby spinach
- 2 large cloves garlic, minced
- Freshly ground pepper
- Kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 cup whole-wheat bread crumbs
- ½ cup walnuts, toasted and finely chopped
- Cooking spray
- 6 whole-grain vegan hamburger buns

Toppings: Baby arugula, basil, roasted red bell peppers, and spicy mustard, optional

Preparation:

- **Step 1:** Bring lentils and 1¾ cup of the broth to a boil in a medium saucepan over high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low, partially cover, and simmer until the lentils are fully softened and the liquid is absorbed, about 30 minutes. Transfer to a medium bowl with the remaining 1 tablespoon broth and mash well with a potato masher. Set aside.
- **Step 2:** Heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add the chopped onion, lemon juice, and ¼ teaspoon salt and cook, stirring until softened, about 6 minutes. Add the spinach, garlic, 1½ teaspoons black pepper, and cumin and stir until the spinach is wilted, about 3 minutes.
- **Step 3:** Add the spinach mixture, breadcrumbs, walnuts, and ¾ teaspoon salt to the lentils and mix thoroughly. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or overnight.
- **Step 4:** Preheat the grill to medium-high. Form the mixture into six 4-inch patties and spray with cooking spray on each side. Grill until grill marks form, about 3 minutes per side. Place the patties in the buns with the toppings as desired, and serve.

Servings: 6

The information provided in this newsletter is for educational purposes only and should not be used as a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Except where noted, models are used in photos and their appearance here is not reflective of a specific disease profile. Some photos were taken prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our practitioners and patients are required to wear appropriate PPE at all times.

Read Healthy Outlook online at mountsinai.org/southnassau.