

# Gender and Age Differences in Melanoma Incidence in New York State

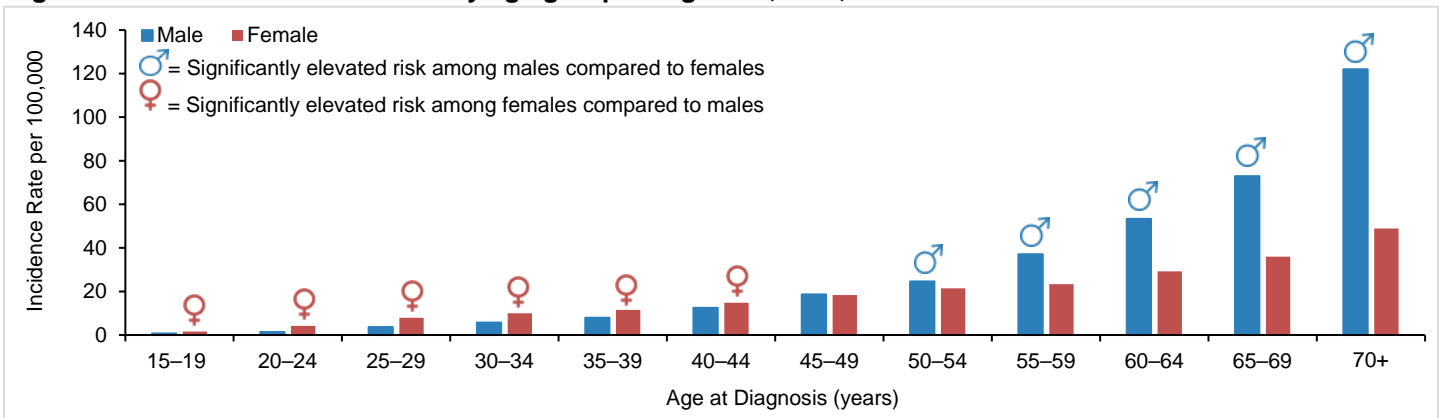


In New York State, melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, is the ninth most common cancer type for all residents and the fourth most common for young adults ages 20 to 34 years.<sup>1</sup> Exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun or indoor tanning causes 90% of melanomas.<sup>2</sup> Men are more likely to develop melanoma than women. Risk differs by age group and may be related to how men and women are exposed to UV radiation. Nationally, female youth are significantly more likely than male youth to report indoor tanning which increases melanoma risk.<sup>2,3</sup> Compared to women, men are more likely to work outdoors, increasing lifetime sun exposure.<sup>4</sup> Wearing sunscreen and protective clothing

outdoors and avoiding indoor tanning reduces exposure to UV radiation and can help prevent melanoma. Data in NYS show:

- In younger age groups (under 45 years), the rates of melanoma among females were significantly higher than among males (Figure 1). Of note, females ages 20-24 had three times the risk of developing melanoma compared to their male counterparts.
- Like most cancers, melanoma risk increases with age. Among those aged 50 and older, males had twice the risk of developing melanoma compared to females (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Melanoma incidence rate by age group and gender, NYS, 2009-2013**



Data Source: New York State Cancer Registry

## Public Health Opportunity

Policymakers, employers, schools, and childcare centers can reduce the risk of skin cancer in communities through strategies outlined in the [NYS Comprehensive Cancer Control Plan](#):

- Increase opportunities for shade in outdoor and recreational settings such as playgrounds, parks, and worksites.
- Educate children, youth, and employees about sun safety.
- Restrict the availability and use of indoor tanning devices by minors.

For more information, please send an e-mail to [BCDER@health.ny.gov](mailto:BCDER@health.ny.gov) with IFA # 2017-03 in the subject line. To access other Information for Action reports, visit the NYSDOH public website: [http://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/prevention/injury\\_prevention/information\\_for\\_action/index.htm](http://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/prevention/injury_prevention/information_for_action/index.htm)

<sup>1</sup>New York State Cancer Registry. Cancer Incidence and Mortality in New York State, 1976-2013. <http://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/cancer/registry/>.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. [The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent Skin Cancer](#).

<sup>3</sup><https://nccd.cdc.gov/youthonline/App/Default.aspx>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/tips-for-men.htm>