



Media Release – For immediate release
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SunSmart Week a Reminder To Be Safe In The Sun

With summer on its way Ultra Violet (UV) radiation levels will be rising so SunSmart Week (8 – 14 November) is here as a timely reminder to us all to take care in the sun this summer.

Melanie Desmarais, Waikato/Bay of Plenty Cancer Society health promotion manager, says News Zealanders have a high risk of developing a skin cancer during their lifetime.

“Skin cancer is the most common cancer in New Zealand. Our skin cancer rates are also among the highest in the world.

“There are over 1800 new melanoma cases and about 45,000 new non-melanoma cases every year. Nearly 300 people die from melanoma each year, and the sad fact is over 90% of skin cancers are caused by overexposure to the sun and can be easily avoided.

“The costs to the New Zealand health system for skin cancer are in excess of \$33 million annually.”

The Cancer Society recommends New Zealanders use SunSmart sun protection measures when the UV Index is three or above, particularly between the hours of 11am and 4pm:

- **Slip** on some sun-protective clothing that covers as much skin as possible and slip into some shade.
- **Slop** on SPF30+ sunscreen that is broad spectrum and water resistant. Put it on 20 minutes before going outdoors and every two hours afterwards. Sunscreen should never be used as the main or only form of defence against the sun or to extend the time spent in the sun.
- **Slap** on a hat that protects the face, head, neck and ears
- **Wrap** on sunglasses that meet Aus/NZ standards

- More -



Throughout SunSmart Week the Cancer Society will be out and about with Undercover Cody – the cool undercover turtle - spreading the SunSmart message to children aged under 10.

The Cancer Society will also be promoting its Outdoor Workers Kit, designed to help keep employees safe from the sun while they work outside.

To find out more about the Cancer Society's SunSmart Week, or for more information on how you can stay safe in the sun, visit: www.cancernz.org.nz/divisions/waikato-bop or www.sunsmart.org.nz.

Ends

For further information, please contact:

Judy Gould
Chief Executive
Waikato/Bay of Plenty Division of the Cancer Society of NZ Inc.
Ph: 07 838 2027
Email: judygould@cancersociety.org.nz

Editor's Note:

The Waikato/Bay of Plenty Division of the Cancer Society of New Zealand Inc is a non-profit organisation that receives no direct financial support from the Government. We are funded by bequests and donations from the public as well as fundraising activities.

We are committed to minimising the impact of cancer in our communities by providing:

- Quality support services for people affected by cancer
- Education to promote early detection and help reduce the risk of cancer
- Free information and resources on cancer
- Support for research into the causes, prevention, detection and treatment of cancer

