about sun protection factor (SPF) and proper use of sunscreen. Most students did not know the meaning of SPF numbers, what SPF sunscreen would be most appropriate to use, how often to reapply sunscreen, and whether sunscreen was immediately effective or required time to activate. Perhaps most surprisingly, most students used a tanning bed or tanned in the sun to improve their appearance.

The most common reason for ignoring skin cancer warnings, as one student stated, was “because it is not as scary as other cancers,” such as breast and lung cancer, which were described as widely publicized. Other reasons included confusion about sunscreen, lack of understanding of the risks of skin cancer, lack of realization that it could happen to them, lack of awareness of skin cancer, unwillingness to deal with the issue, and the belief that prevention efforts might not pay off. One student noted that “people have the perception that they can fix their skin later because companies sell products for age reversal, so people think they can fix the problem later and not worry about it now.”

To make the risks of skin cancer seem “real,” students recommended media campaigns featuring celebrity spokespersons telling real-life stories about skin cancer. As one student noted, “they put [breast cancer] in the movies, on big billboards, or in a big race; there’s nothing like that for skin cancer.” Another student pointed out that “celebrities have causes, but I don’t think anyone’s tackled skin cancer in particular.” Students also recommended graphic depictions of illness, with media campaigns using pictures of the devastating physical outcomes of skin cancer to increase people’s awareness. The use of both narratives and “fear” appeals may be ideas worth pursuing, given that research shows that those strategies can be persuasive.5,6

Students suggested that patients may be more influenced by face-to-face communication with physicians than by media campaigns. They also recommended that primary care providers discuss skin cancer risks and sun-protection behaviors as part of routine history taking with all patients; this is preferable to relying on dermatologists, who are specialists and therefore not the best source of initial screenings and/or warnings. In general, patients seek dermatology care only after discovering a skin problem rather than on a routine basis, starting in childhood, and therefore miss the opportunity for early education on sun protection and skin cancer risks. Hence, by highlighting skin cancer risks and prevention strategies in the medical curriculum and by training our students to include skin cancer discussion as part of their routine patient history taking, dermatologists, with the assistance of primary care physicians, may dramatically expand patient education.

Comment. The results of this study suggest that well-educated medical students do not understand the importance of preventive behaviors and level of skin cancer risk. Therefore, new strategies to persuasively communicate information and warnings about skin cancer are needed to diminish the rise of this highly preventable disease.

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Accepted for Publication: November 12, 2011.
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Financial Disclosure: None reported.

A Comparison of Florida Skin Cancer Screening Rates With Those in the Rest of the United States

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lorida has the second largest number of melanoma cases in the country, an estimated 4430 cases in 2008.1 Fortunately, the 5-year survival rate for individuals whose melanoma is treated before it spreads to the lymph nodes is 98%.1 Knowing the high UV index in Florida and lack of population-based data on skin cancer screening among the different US states, we designed our study to compare skin cancer screening rates among Floridians with those of residents in the rest of the United States.

Methods. The National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) is an annual, cross-sectional household survey of the US
civilian noninstitutionalized population. We analyzed data from the 2000 and 2005 NHIS Cancer Control Modules (CCMs), which are the only sources of national population-based data on cancer screening. In all CCMs, participants were asked, “Have you EVER had all of your skin from head to toe checked for cancer by a dermatologist or some other kind of doctor?” (yes/no). Then they were asked “When did you have your MOST RECENT skin exam to check for cancer?” (yes/no). Data were grouped according to whether participants reported a skin examination during the last 12 months.

Data were pooled, and analyses took into account sample weights and design effects. Logistic regression analyses were performed with self-reported skin screening as the outcome of interest. Florida data were analyzed after adjusting for the sociodemographic and employment-related indicators listed in Table 2. We found that Floridians retained significantly higher odds of skin cancer screening in the past year than residents in the rest of the US states (odds ratio, 1.52; 95% CI, 1.52-1.54). We also found that Floridians reported higher rates of screening than those groups in the rest of the US states.

After adjusting for the sociodemographic and health-related indicators listed in Table 2, we found that Floridians retained significantly higher odds of skin cancer screening in the past year than residents in the rest of the US states (odds ratio, 1.52; 95% CI, 1.52-1.54).

Comment. Compared with residents of the rest of the nation, Floridians reported higher rates of skin cancer screening, which were also evident across a range of sociodemographic groups. Results suggest that regional variations in screening rates exist in the United States. However, it is unclear if early detection reduces mortality or morbidity from skin cancer. It is important to note that Medicare does not cover skin cancer screening, however, some insurers within Florida promote skin cancer detection by providing free yearly screening. Also, Florida insurers allow direct patient access to dermatologists without a prior referral.

Table 1. Percentage Differences in Skin Cancer Screening in the Past Year in Florida vs the Rest of the United Statesa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent Characteristic</th>
<th>Florida</th>
<th>Rest of US States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3963 (11.0) (9.9-12.4)b</td>
<td>56 155 (7.5) (7.3-7.8)b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>1738 (10.5) (9.1-12.1)b</td>
<td>24 379 (7.1) (6.7-7.5)b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age, y</td>
<td>2225 (11.6) (9.6-13.9)b</td>
<td>31 776 (7.9) (7.6-8.3)b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>3212 (12.2) (10.8-13.8)</td>
<td>44 746 (8.2) (7.9-8.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>654 (5.5) (3.7-8.0)</td>
<td>7847 (4.3) (3.9-5.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>97 (7.0) (2.1-21.4)</td>
<td>3562 (3.8) (3.1-4.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>2867 (13.0) (11.6-14.6)</td>
<td>46 989 (8.1) (7.8-8.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1096 (3.4) (2.4-4.8)</td>
<td>9166 (2.9) (2.5-3.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>751 (6.7) (4.4-10.0)</td>
<td>11 069 (4.4) (4.0-4.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health insurance status</td>
<td>1169 (10.4) (8.5-12.7)</td>
<td>16 142 (5.7) (5.2-6.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insured</td>
<td>3074 (13.2) (11.9-14.7)</td>
<td>46 620 (8.6) (8.3-8.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uninsured</td>
<td>879 (3.0) (1.9-4.6)</td>
<td>9330 (2.0) (1.7-2.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment status</td>
<td>2311 (8.0) (6.6-9.7)</td>
<td>33 204 (6.5) (6.2-6.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>1619 (15.4) (13.4-17.7)</td>
<td>22 556 (9.3) (8.8-9.8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Data are from the 2000 and 2005 National Health Interview Survey and are reported as number (percentage) of respondents (95% CI of percentage).

aCalculated as weight in kilograms divided by height in meters squared.
referral (statute 627.6472). Florida also has several cancer initiatives that may be positively influencing screening activities, such as the Governor’s Task Force on Skin Cancer Prevention and the Moffitt Cancer Center’s program, “Mole Patrol.” This center has launched educational opportunities for Florida health care providers, which could have led to a greater awareness for routine screening. In addition, many Florida dermatologists have completed their residency in Florida, and are thus more aware of the dangers of residing at Florida’s latitude. Finally, living in the “Sunshine State” may raise awareness of the need for skin cancer screening, especially for those with a family history of cancer.

Limitations of this study include the self-report and cross-sectional nature of the NHIS. A similarly worded self-reported whole-body skin examination question has been validated previously at a sensitivity of 90.5%, but this study was conducted outside of the United States. Also, it is unclear who is conducting the screening, and previous literature has shown that screening accuracy varies by practitioner type. Nevertheless, the combination of stakeholder efforts for skin cancer screening is essential, especially given the high prevalence of melanoma in Florida.

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Accepted for Publication: November 29, 2011.

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Financial Disclosure: None reported.

Funding/support: The study was fully funded by Bankhead Coley Cancer Research Program grant 1BG06-341963 (Dr Lee).

Role of the Sponsors: The sponsors had no role in the design and conduct of the study; in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data; or in the preparation, review, or approval of the manuscript.

Additional Contributions: The US Department of Health and Human Services and the National Center for Health Statistics collected and compiled the data in the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS). The collector of the original data bears no responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented in this publication. The Research Data Center conducted our analyses.


No Association Between Coffee and Caffeine Intake and Risk of Psoriasis in US Women

Psoriasis is an immune-mediated disorder, but the involved genetic and environmental factors remain to be elucidated. The positive and negative effects of coffee and caffeine on psoriasis have been reported previously. Among the positive effects, coffee has anti-oxidative properties that may help quell inflammation; topical caffeine has been used for the psoriasis treatment; and coffee intake may improve the efficacy of methotrexate and sulfasalazine for psoriasis treatment. On the other hand, diterpenes present in unfiltered coffee and caffeine may increase serum cholesterol levels and blood pressure; exceptionally high caffeine plasma levels were shown to induce an adverse effect of photochemotherapy on psoriasis; and coffee and caffeine have been implicated as contributing to psoriasis and flaring psoriasis phenotypes, although this last association has not been scientifically proven. It would be of public health significance to elucidate the long-term relationship between coffee and caffeine intake and the risk of psoriasis. Currently, there is a paucity of research on this topic, and the association remains unclear. Herein, we evaluated the association between consumption of coffee, decaffeinated coffee, and caffeine and the risk of incident psoriasis in women in the United States.

Methods. Participants free of psoriasis in 1991 were included from the Nurses’ Health Study (NHS) II and ob-