



Your monthly guide to sun safety, expert skin health insights, and the latest updates from The Sun Bus's community outreach initiatives.

February Spotlight: Advancing Skin Health Equity

This month we highlight early detection and melanoma awareness in communities of color.

No Insurance? What to Do After a Concerning Skin Check

By Vy Bui, MS1

Don't ignore it. A biopsy is the only way to confirm skin cancer. Low-cost care and prescription discounts are available. Early diagnosis means reassurance or timely, life-saving treatment.

Low-cost care¹:

- [National Association of Free and Charitable Clinics](#)
- [HRSA Health Centers](#)
- [NeedyMeds](#)

Prescription discounts¹:

- [RxHope](#)
- [Blink Health](#)
- [RxAssist](#)

The Sun Bus is a member of the National Association of Free and Charitable Clinics.

If melanoma is diagnosed, [Assistance Fund](#) can help cover treatment and insurance-related costs. For education on insurance coverage, benefits and finances, connect with [Triage Health](#).

Amelanotic Melanoma: Sneaky and Surprising, Not Dark and Scary

By Lydia Maxon, Incoming Medical Student

Melanoma isn't always the dark, scary spot you've been warned about. "Classical" melanoma is asymmetrical with irregular pigment. "Amelanotic" means the tumor **lacks pigmentation**.² **8%** of melanomas are estimated to be amelanotic.³

- Typically red or skin-colored³
- More symmetrical in shape³
- Mistaken for squamous cell or basal cell carcinoma²



Abbreviations: MS = Medical Student

References: 1. American Academy of Dermatology. (2025). No health insurance? How to follow-up after a skin cancer check. 2. Koch SE, Lange JR. (2000). Amelanotic melanoma: The great masquerader. *J Am Acad Dermatol*. 3. Muinonen-Martin AJ et al. (2018). Amelanotic melanoma. *BMJ*.

Recognizing Skin Cancer in Skin of Color

By Nicole Chin, Pre-Doctoral Research Fellow



Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC)⁴

- Shiny, smooth bump
- Dark or skin-colored
- Grows slowly



Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC)⁴

- Rough or scaly spot
- Thick bump or sore
- Can hurt or bleed



Any new or changing skin spot should be checked by a doctor!

Sun-Smart Science: How Skin Fights Cancer from Within

By Lola Oladinni, OMS4

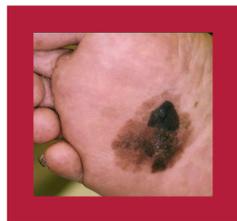
- Researchers have found that a protein called **YTHDF2** limits UVB-driven inflammation in skin cells.⁵
- UVB exposure inhibits YTHDF2, increasing risk of harmful inflammation and skin cancer.⁵
- Their findings suggest that YTHDF2 could be a potential therapeutic target for preventing and treating skin cancer.⁵



Hidden in Plain Sight: Melanoma in Skin of Color

By Brittani Remé, DO, MS

Melanoma can affect all skin tones, however, it is often diagnosed later in skin of color.⁶ Acral lentiginous melanoma appears on the palms, soles, and nails, and is the most common type of melanoma in people of color.⁶ See a dermatologist for new, changing, dark streaks or spots in these areas.



Early detection is critical and lifesaving.

Abbreviations: DO = Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, MS = Master of Science, OMS = Osteopathic Medical Student, UVB = Ultraviolet B

References: 4. American Academy of Dermatology. (2025). Finding skin cancer in darker skin tones. 5. Yang S, Cui YH, Li H, et al. (2025). YTHDF2 regulates self non-coding RNA metabolism to control inflammation and tumorigenesis. *Nat Commun*. 6. Skudalski L, McMullan P, Grant-Kels JM. (2025). Melanoma in patients with skin of color. *Clin Dermatol*.