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## ABC7 FINDS THE FACTS ON SKIN CANCER

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**FORT MYERS:** It's the most common kind of cancer, and it keeps killing a rising number of people across Florida every year - skin cancer. There were 640 skin cancer related deaths across the state last year. County by county, Lee County was the fourth deadliest in the state in terms of those skin cancer deaths.

ABC7's Scott Dobroski found out what you might not know that could save your life.

You can't tell by looking at him - but 72-year-old Ethan Jackson is a skin cancer survivor. He went through extreme surgeries to get rid of it.

"I've had half my nose replaced, and a lot of places taken off," said Jackson.

Jackson's doctors told him that as with most cases, too much sun caused it.

"Abuse as a youngster - we didn't use sun tan lotion at all," said Jackson.

The strong Florida sun is no doubt a big cause of skin cancer, but if you have it, how do you really know you have it? ABC7 got the answer.

"Really, skin cancer can present as anything on the skin, so that's what's surprising. You might think, 'oh, that's nothing,' but you really should have anything looking unusual on your skin checked out," Dermatologist Dr. Kim Davidson

She says there are three types of skin cancer.

The two most common types look sort of like a pimple - pink and likely itchy. The good news is they are 99-percent treatable.

But the third kind, melanoma, is much more dangerous. It appears darker and thicker on the skin.

But Dr. Davidson says if detected early, "There's a 95-percent cure rate which is good. If it's already spread though, then the numbers aren't so good."

Davidson says the best advice is to get a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 and to make sure it protects you against UVA rays - not just UVB.

Also, keep an eye out for new products with sun block built in.

"You can even buy a laundry detergent that can ingrain the sun block into your clothing," said Dr. Davidson.

Jackson says he just wishes he knew then what he knows now.

"I would have worn good, heavy sun block all the time," said Jackson.

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