



# HEALTH AWARENESS

## In Your Face About Skin Health

(NAPSA)—For many, warmer weather means a more active lifestyle with more time spent in the sun. Along with wearing lighter clothing, sleeveless shirts and shorts, it can also be a good time to take notice of your skin because it is no longer hidden under winter sweaters.

### Sun Exposure And AKs

One condition many people are not aware of is actinic keratoses, or AKs. An AK is a small crusty or scaly bump or horn that arises on or beneath the skin surface. The base may be light or dark, tan, pink, red or a combination of these or the same color as the skin.

People 40 and over who have had chronic sun exposure, burn rather than tan in the sun, or spend large amounts of time in the sun without sunscreen are at higher risk for AKs.

Dr. Jeffrey M. Weinberg, dermatologist and director of the Clinical Research Center at St. Luke's-Roosevelt Hospital in New York City, says, "If left untreated, AKs may progress to more serious conditions such as squamous cell carcinoma, a type of skin cancer. About 20 percent of all squamous cell carcinomas begin as AKs. The good news is AKs can be treated with a topical cream such as Carac [fluorouracil cream 0.5%]."

Having your doctor examine your skin can increase the chance of finding AKs. Most AKs can be seen by the naked eye or identified by touch.

### Sunlight And Risk Factors

Sunlight exposure is usually most intense during the summer and between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Outdoor activities can



**To protect your skin, the Centers for Disease Control recommends avoiding the sun during the hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

increase the chances of getting sunburned.

This is significant, since sunburn is an important risk factor for skin cancer: basal cell and squamous cell carcinoma and melanoma.

To help, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends the following sun-protection behaviors: wearing a wide-brimmed hat, covering up while in the sun, wearing wraparound sunglasses and using sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher.

### Important Safety Information

Carac (fluorouracil cream 0.5%) should not be used by women who are pregnant, considering becoming pregnant or nursing. Carac should not be used by people with dihydropyrimidine dehydrogenase (DPD) enzyme deficiency. The most common side effects are skin reactions including redness, dryness, burning, pain, erosion (loss of upper layer of skin), swelling and eye irritation. For full prescribing information, visit [www.carac.info](http://www.carac.info).