

Healthy Living

Be Sun Smart All Year Round

(NAPSA)—Many people think that summer is the only time to take caution with the sun, but sun protection is important year-round. While skiing or visiting warmer climates in the winter, it is important to remember to protect yourself.

Surprising to many sun-loving Americans is that 40 percent of the more than 250,000 new cases of squamous cell carcinoma (a type of skin cancer) may be the result of ignoring a condition few people have ever heard of: actinic keratoses, or AKs. These are precancerous skin lesions that have the potential to progress to a more serious condition.

What Are 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. The crust is horny, dry and rough. Occasionally, it itches or produces a pricking or tender sensation. It can also become inflamed and surrounded by redness. In rare instances, actinic keratoses can bleed.

Who Is At Risk?

- People 40 and over who have had chronic sun exposure; burn rather than tan in the sun; and spend large amounts of time in the sun without sunscreen are at higher risk for AKs. Doctors recommend a regular skin screening by a dermatologist. The good news is that AKs are treatable when identified—before they have the potential to progress to a more



People should not take sun-related skin problems such as AKs lightly.

serious condition such as squamous cell carcinoma. One of the medications doctors use is Carac® (Fluorouracil Cream 0.5%), a topical cream that is safe and effective in the treatment of AKs. It is available by prescription and is the only topical with convenient “once daily dosing.” Carac is indicated for the topical treatment of multiple actinic or solar keratoses of the face and anterior scalp.

Important Safety Information

Carac 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 more information, visit www.carac.info.