

## ULTRA ACCESS May Newsletter

### Skin Cancer Awareness Month - with a Scaffolders spin on it...

Skin Cancer, with its most common type being also known as Melanoma, is a more milder form of Cancer, that when / if discovered early enough is treatable in 99% of cases - according to The Skin Cancer Foundation.

It's, in most cases highly preventable and avoidable, with a few simple actions being required to reduce the risks of contracting (this whilst mild, but) very much uncomfortable and inconvenient condition.

Skin Cancer is caused by prolonged exposure to ultraviolet light (or UV) rays mainly from The Sun, but also can be contracted by excessive usage of Tanning Beds, and the like.

The UV light rays in essence "cook" ones skin cells / outer skin layers due to radiation from the UV light, and in turn over time cause tumours to form on the skin.

There are however several ways to help combat this condition.

The most effective way to reduce the risk is to avoid going out and being in direct sunlight... this is however not practical, for a number of reasons and especially for scaffolders.

So, how do we reduce the risk for ourselves?

1. Using Sun Cream, with a suitable factor rating. SPF (or Sun Protection Factor) 30-50 is generally considered suitable for the kind of sunshine we get in Britain.
2. Rubbing said SPF 30-50 cream into areas that would have excessive sun exposure like ones forearms, face, (head if bald) or neck when PPE is worn, and especially the back of the neck would help reduce the risk significantly.
3. As unreasonable as it might seem, wearing thin, long sleeves t-shirts to cover over as much of your exposed arms as possible would also help, and safety gloves, although this could potentially lead to dehydration due to excessive sweating - so try and remain as hydrated as you can.
4. Maybe think of moving to areas to work that might be shaded over by large buildings, if possible, and continue working there in extreme temperatures, allowing said temperatures to naturally drop during the course of the afternoon - going back later on, and moving break times (where one might be tempted to remove their upper body clothing to "air out") to times either before or after midday, when the sun is at its highest point and brightest could also help.

Most projects actually have free to use Sun Cream available for all those on site, and if not, you can get a small tube from most healthcare shops for a few £ pound to keep in your kit bag for when you need it... and please try to avoid working "skins only" / topless, as this is a sure way to contract Skin Cancer quicker than usual, as for the most of us, our bare upper bodies are not used to direct sun exposure, apart from the customary 2-week holiday we hope to enjoy.

