



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Older Adults Need to Take Caution With Prolonged Sun Exposure

(Malden, MA)—During these warm summer days, we enjoy being outside on the golf course, out in the ocean fishing or on the beach enjoying the cool sea water. However, those of us who are sun worshippers put ourselves at risk long before there was much talk about the connection between sun exposure and skin cancer.

For older adults, much of the damage to our skin was done before we were out of our teens. Thirty and 40 years ago, we used creams to treat painful sunburn, but we never thought about preventing it in the first place. Unfortunately, those glorious days in the sun can cause serious illness in the future.

Prolonged sun exposure results in a breakdown of fibers in the skin that ultimately can lead to facial sagging, mottled pigmentation, an increased risk of bruising and tearing, dilation of small blood vessels, wrinkles, and pre-cancerous and cancerous skin lesions. It's easy today to see that all the hours spent in the sun were detrimental to our health. Continued exposure continues the risk.

When outside in the sun for a good length of time, individuals are encouraged to wear a hat, cover up by wearing long sleeve shirts/pants, and most importantly, apply sunscreen with a SPF of 30 or greater to all exposed skin, and try to avoid being in the direct sun when it's at its strongest, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Dermatologists (skin doctors) encourage older adults to perform skin self-exams regularly. You should look for moles/growths that are "patriotic"—red, blue, or white. You also should look for changes in the size or texture of the moles/growths. During your annual physical, your doctor should be made aware of any suspicious lesions.

Despite the damage the sun can cause us, you can still enjoy outdoor activities as long as you cover up and wear sunscreen!

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About Mystic Valley Elder Services

Located in Malden, Mass., Mystic Valley Elder Services is a non-profit agency that provides essential home- and community-based care and resources to elders, adults living with disabilities, and caregivers who reside in Chelsea, Everett, Malden, Medford, Melrose, North Reading, Reading, Revere, Stoneham, Wakefield and Winthrop. Agency services include coordination of home care, transportation, Meals on Wheels, and information and referrals. For more information, please call (781) 324-7705 or visit www.mves.org.