

Skin Cancer Prevention for Outdoor Workers



Skin cancer is the most common cancer in Ireland with **11,000** cases diagnosed annually¹.



Outdoor workers are identified as a high-risk group for the development of skin cancer as they spend long periods outdoors.

1 in 4

Recent Central Statistics Office (CSO) figures suggests almost **1 in 4** skin cancer deaths in Ireland are among those who worked in the construction, outdoor and farming industries.*



Most skin cancers could be prevented by protecting skin from ultraviolet radiation (UV). UV is a part of sunlight. It can damage the skin and increase risk of skin cancer.



Outdoor workers can be exposed to between **2-3 times more** UV radiation than indoor workers².

What can outdoor worker do to protect their skin from the sun?



Slip on clothing that covers your skin such as, long sleeves, collared shirts.



Slop on sunscreen: Use sunscreen SPF 30 or higher 20 minutes before going outside and re-apply every 2 hours – more often if sweating.



Slap on a wide brimmed hat, hard hat with a brim and use a neck flap.



Seek shade – especially if outdoors between 11am to 3pm when UV rays are at their strongest. Plan your work outdoors early in the morning or late afternoon to avoid the peak UV sunrays. Use trees or portable shade for break times and lunch.



Slide on sunglasses. Use UV protective eyewear.

If you notice a new or changing mole or growth on your skin contact your GP without delay. For more information on being SunSmart visit www.hse.ie/sunsmart

* Based on CSO data for 2016-2018(provisional) on deaths due to melanoma among those employed or previously employed in the construction farming and other outdoor sectors.

Reference

1. National Cancer Registry Ireland (2024) Cancer in Ireland 1994-2022: Annual statistical report of the National Cancer Registry. NCRI, Cork, Ireland.
2. CAREX Canada. Occupational Exposure Estimate for Solar UV Radiation. (2018)

