Melanoma Awareness
Education and Early Prevention

Americans have a 1 in 74 lifetime risk of developing melanoma, which kills almost 7,800 people each year. Melanoma is often curable if detected and treated early.

Can it happen to me? - Prolonged exposure to sun, no daily sunscreen used, fair complexion, red hair, freckling and increased age. Do you fit one of these criteria then yes it can happen to you!

Melanoma is most often found in men on the area between the shoulders and hips or on the head and neck. It is found often on the legs of women. Folks with an increased risk for melanoma also include those with a personal or family history of pigmented skin blemishes or melanoma, a fair complexion, red hair, or a severe childhood sunburn.

Prevention and risk reduction includes protecting yourself from prolonged exposure to sunlight or ultraviolet radiation [tanning booth], always wear sunscreen SPF 15+ outdoors, and have an annual full-body screen by a dermatologist.

The sudden appearance of a new mole in or near an existing mole or a mole that has changed shape or color should be considered suspicious.

Cancerous and malignant lesions are typically irregular in shape with uneven borders with many shades of brown + black and larger than 6mm [the size of a pencil eraser] and grow quickly. Benign or non-malignant moles are typically round or symmetrical with smooth, even borders, a single shade of brown, smaller than 6mm and grow slowly.

Treatment includes excision, lymph node dissection and then possibly injection treatments of Interferon after surgery. Riding your bike during all this treatment may not be an option! Awareness is your key to another wonderful year of bike riding, so pay as close attention to your body as you do to caring/polishing your Goldwing. Go to www.melanoma.com for more information and pictures.

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