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Sun Safety is in Your Hands – Statewide Sunscreen Dispenser Program Adds 16 Sites

Coalition of health groups team up with recreation sites to combat high rates of skin cancer.

BURLINGTON, VT – If you are among those who didn't bring sunscreen when enjoying the outdoors at a Vermont park or recreation site, we've got you covered! Vermont's cancer coalition (VTAAC), Dartmouth Cancer Center, University of Vermont (UVM) Cancer Center and national non-profit IMPACT Melanoma are expanding a program that stationed free sunscreen dispensers at 12 parks around the state last year. With the addition of 16 new dispenser sites, even more people will have access to free sunscreen and the protection it provides against over exposure to the sun.

Vermont has the nation's second-highest incidence rate of melanoma, the most dangerous form of skin cancer. According to the Vermont Department of Health, exposure to ultraviolet light from the sun or tanning beds is a major risk factor for developing melanoma.

"Prevention is the key to avoiding this deadly form of cancer," said Sharon Mallory, director of the Health Department's Comprehensive Cancer Control Program. "Even on cloudy or cool days ultraviolet rays can be harmful, so it's important to protect your skin with a sunblock that's labeled SPF 30 or higher," said Mallory. "These dispensers provide free and easy to access sunscreen for everyone, which means you don't have to worry that you left yours at home."

"To put it simply, sun safety is literally in our hands," said Hanna Snyder, coalition coordinator of VTAAC, which oversees the dispenser program. "Our goal is to meet people where they are. And not just with sunscreen, but to also make sure Vermonters have the information they need to understand sun safety, the risk exposure presents for cancer, and the actions they can take to keep themselves and their family safe outdoors," Snyder said.

Each site will receive a sunscreen dispenser and a start-up supply of sunscreen through this program. Sites also implement additional sun safety programming, such as education through posters, social media, and outdoor swim instruction.

The convenience of sunscreen access can make an important difference, especially among young people. Any sunburn increases your risk of developing melanoma.

Experts advise that the best way to protect yourself from UV rays while still enjoying the warm weather is to use sunscreen, seek shade during the middle of the day when the sun's rays are strongest, and to cover up with clothing, hats and UV-blocking sunglasses.

"We are so fortunate to have partners like the State of Vermont and our friends at VTAAC, the UVM Cancer Center and the Dartmouth Cancer Center in making cancer prevention accessible to everyone," said Deb Girard, executive director of IMPACT Melanoma.

2024 Sunscreen Dispenser Sites:

<u>County</u>	<u>Sunscreen Site</u>
1. Bennington	Arlington Lions Club (<i>Arlington Lions Club Pavilion</i>)
2. Chittenden	Cathedral Square Elm Place (<i>Milton Family Park Community Center</i>)
3. Franklin	Enosburgh Public Library (<i>at Library for Community Events/Youth Camps</i>)
4. Franklin	Highgate Parks & Rec (<i>Sports Arena</i>)
5. Franklin	Swanton Public Library (<i>at Library for Community Events/Youth Camps</i>)
6. Grand Isle	Camp Ta-Kum-Ta (<i>At Pool and Inside for Winter Use</i>)
7. Lamoille	Lamoille Family Center (<i>Lamoille Family Center Play Yard</i>)
8. Lamoille	Capstone Community Action, Inc. (<i>Lamoille Center for Integrated Services</i>)
9. Orange	Little Rivers Health Care (<i>Located at Elizabeth Park</i>)
10. Orleans	Barton Community Giving Garden (<i>at Garden/Community Outdoor Space</i>)
11. Orleans	City of Newport (<i>Prouty Beach Campground</i>)
12. Orleans	Craftsbury Outdoor Center (<i>Summer & Winter Use</i>)
13. Orleans	The Wellness Center (NCH) (<i>Location Near Bike Share/Trail access</i>)
14. Washington	Green Mountain United Way (<i>Outdoor Space near Exercise & Childcare Facilities</i>)
15. Windham	Winston Prouty Center for Child & Family Development (<i>Near Trails, Sports Fields</i>)
16. Windsor	Edgar May Health & Recreation Center (<i>Near Swimming, Trails</i>)

For more information on sun safety and the full list of sunscreen dispenser sites, visit [VTAAC.org/free-sunscreen-dispenser-initiative](https://vtaac.org/free-sunscreen-dispenser-initiative).

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Vermonters Taking Action Against Cancer (VTAAC): *VTAAC is Vermont's statewide cancer coalition. VTAAC is responsible for putting the Vermont Cancer Plan into action by preventing overlap and directing resources to where they matter most in our state. Activities are focused on reaching our ultimate goal: reducing the burden of cancer for all Vermonters. VTAAC is a growing network of groups and individuals that speaks with one voice about reducing cancer risk, detecting cancers earlier, creating better access to quality cancer treatment, and improving the quality of life for cancer survivors. To find out more, visit: <https://vtaac.org>.*

Dartmouth Cancer Center: [Dartmouth Cancer Center](#) combines advanced cancer research at [Dartmouth](#) and the [Geisel School of Medicine](#), with award-winning, personalized, and compassionate patient-centered cancer care and clinical trials based at the Norris Cotton Cancer

Care Pavilion at Dartmouth Health's [Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center](#). With 14 locations around New Hampshire and Vermont, Dartmouth Cancer Center is one of only 56 National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Centers. Each year the Dartmouth Cancer Center schedules 74,000 appointments seeing more than 4,500 newly diagnosed patients, and currently offers patients more than 240 active clinical trials. Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2022, Dartmouth Cancer Center remains committed to excellence, outreach and education. We strive to prevent and cure cancer, enhance survivorship and promote cancer health equity through pioneering interdisciplinary research and collaborations. Learn more at <http://cancer.dartmouth.edu>.

University of Vermont Cancer Center: Founded in 1974, the University of Vermont Cancer Center is Vermont's only not-for-profit comprehensive clinical and research cancer center. The cancer center is located within the University of Vermont Larner College of Medicine and enjoys a clinical partnership with the University of Vermont Health Network. Drawing on the expertise of more than 180 research and clinical members, the center works to reduce the burden of cancer in Vermont, northeastern New York and across northern New England, through research, outstanding clinical care, community outreach, and education. For more information please go to: www.vermontcancer.org.

IMPACT Melanoma: IMPACT Melanoma, a national non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, is the nation's leading non-profit dedicated to significantly reducing melanoma in the United States and saving lives. With a focus on prevention education programs that include customized and integrated programs for communities, IMPACT Melanoma is committed to supporting melanoma patients and their families and advocating for and influencing urban development policies to address shade equity in America. To learn more about IMPACT Melanoma, visit <https://impactmelanoma.org>.