ASDS Urges Hairstylists to Join Fight Against Skin Cancer

To help promote the detection of scalp skin cancer, the American Society for Dermatologic Surgery (ASDS) is asking hairstylists across the country to participate in its new initiative to encourage their clients to get suspicious-looking moles checked by a dermatologist.

Rolling Meadows, Ill. (PRWEB) September 16, 2016 -- To help promote the detection of scalp skin cancer, the American Society for Dermatologic Surgery (ASDS) is asking hairstylists across the country to participate in its new initiative to encourage their clients to get suspicious-looking moles checked by a dermatologist.

Called Stylists Against Skin Cancer, the program teaches hairstylists how to spot potential skin cancer warning signs and what to say to their clients if they spot something suspicious.

“The Stylists Against Skin Cancer program empowers hairstylists to link the public with dermatologists,” said ASDS President Naomi Lawrence, M.D. “Stylists are in a unique position to connect their clients with dermatologists early enough to provide the best opportunity for optimal treatment outcomes.”

Print and electronic educational materials – as well as a video that explains the program and shows hairstylists how to detect suspicious growths on the scalp – can be found at www.asds.net/shade.

ASDS member Ramona Behshad, M.D. – assisted by mentor Vince Bertucci, M.D., FRCPC – created the program as part of the Society’s Future Leaders Network.

“Early detection of skin cancer is vitally important, and hairstylists have access to difficult-to-see areas on a person’s scalp,” Behshad said. “Stylists also are known for having good relationships with their clients so they easily can talk to them about the importance of seeing a dermatologist.”

According to Behshad, most hair care professionals do not receive skin cancer education while in cosmetology school, so the program is aimed at teaching stylists to spot skin cancer warning signs.

Participating stylists have access to a SHADE card that features a diagram of a person’s head and helps them identify potentially dangerous growths or moles. SHADE cards serve a reminder to stylists of potential warning signs of scalp skin cancer:

• Surface: The skin surface is scaly, crusty and/or bleeding.
• Height: The skin is raised or sunken.
• Age: The suspicious growth has been there for more than one month, or the client is 40 or older.
• Dermatology Evaluation: Hairstylists are encouraged to refer their client to an ASDS dermatologist.

“By detecting growths suspicious for skin cancer and making appropriate referrals to dermatologists early, hair professionals can help to prevent the progression of dangerous skin cancers,” Behshad said. “With the education we’re providing, hair professionals will be able to provide their clients with valuable information that they can then share with a dermatologist.”
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