Canada’s dermatologists to do cancer screening on Parliament Hill this Melanoma Monday

OTTAWA, Ont., May 1, 2017 – It’s Melanoma Monday and the Canadian Dermatology Association (CDA) is returning to the Hill to hold its annual skin cancer screening for all Members of Parliament and Senators.

The annual observance, which takes place as Canadians head outdoors for warm-weather activities, draws attention to the most serious form of skin cancer, and reminds the public of the need to check their skin regularly for danger signs. This year’s event comes only months after the death of cultural icon Stuart McLean, following a losing battle with melanoma.

“While Mr. McLean’s death was a national tragedy, it was by no means a rarity,” said CDA President Dr. Mariusz Sapijaszko. “It is estimated that in 2016, 6,800 Canadians were diagnosed with melanoma and 1,200 died from the disease. And the numbers keep going up year after year.”

The Parliament Hill screening is Co-hosted by Geoff Regan, Speaker of the House of Commons, and Bill Casey, MP for Cumberland-Colchester, and organized by the CDA. Mr. Casey was diagnosed with Melanoma at a skin screening clinic on the Hill many years ago and was then able to get prompt treatment to beat the disease. The event was hosted by Dona Cadman, the widow of Chuck Cadman, an MP who died of melanoma.

In addition to the early detection of cancer in parliamentarians, the screening event aims to make people aware of skin cancer’s early warning signs and simple steps for prevention. The early detection and timely treatment of melanoma, basal cell and squamous cell skin cancer can lessen disfigurement and even prevent death in the case of melanoma. As well, avoiding risky practices like tanning beds can reduce the likelihood that skin cancer will occur at all.

Incidence rates of melanoma have increased in both men and women over the past several decades, with recent increases of 2.4% per year in men between 2001 and 2010, and 2.8% per year among women between 2004 and 2010. Exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation through exposure to sunlight, tanning beds and sun lamps appears to be a major risk factor for melanoma. Other risk factors include number and type of moles, having a fair complexion, personal and family history of skin cancer, a weakened immune system and a history of severe blistering sunburn.

Research shows those at risk for melanoma who had a friend or family member help with checking their skin found the disease at a much earlier stage and had a 63 per cent lower death rate compared to those who did not check their skin.

These and other facts about skin cancer prevention can be found at the cda website, dermatology.ca.

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About Melanoma Monday
Melanoma Monday is an internationally recognized day of skin cancer awareness which aims to raise
awareness of melanoma and other types of skin cancer, and to encourage early detection through regular self-exams.

About the CDA
The Canadian Dermatology Association, founded in 1925, represents Canadian dermatologists. The association provides easy access to the largest, most reliable source of medical knowledge on dermatology. CDA exists to advance the science and art of medicine and surgery related to the care of the skin, hair and nails; provide continuing professional development for its members; support and advance patient care; provide public education on sun protection and other aspects of skin health; and promote a lifetime of healthier skin, hair and nails. By doing so, CDA informs and empowers both medical professionals and the Canadian public.

To learn more about what the work CDA does visit www.dermatology.ca or join the conversation on www.Twitter.com/CdnDermatology or www.Facebook.com/CdnDermatology.

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