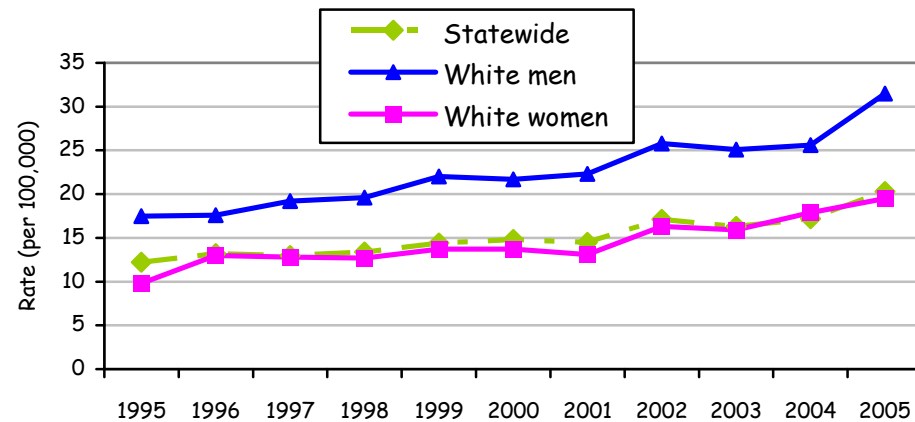


## EXCESS SUN EXPOSURE AND SUN PROTECTION

### Melanoma Cases

Between 1995 and 2005, the number of cases of melanoma, one of the deadliest forms of skin cancer, doubled from 773 to 1,558 in Virginia. The age-adjusted incidence rate increased by 66%, from 12.2 to 20.3 per 100,000 (Figure 1), which makes it one of the few cancers that did not decline over time. Over 90% of melanoma cases occur among whites. For white men, the rate increased from 17.5 to 31.5 per 100,000. For white women, the rate increased from 9.8 to 19.5 per 100,000.

Figure 1 - Age-Adjusted Melanoma Incidence Rate, Virginia, 1995-2005



### Excess Sun Exposure

A third (32%) of adults in Virginia experienced a sunburn in the previous 12 months.<sup>1</sup> The average number of sunburns reported was between two and three burns in the past year. Ten percent had six or more sunburns in the past year (Figure 2). Comparisons to 1999 when adults were first surveyed about sun exposure indicated no change in sunburn prevalence among all groups (Figure 3).

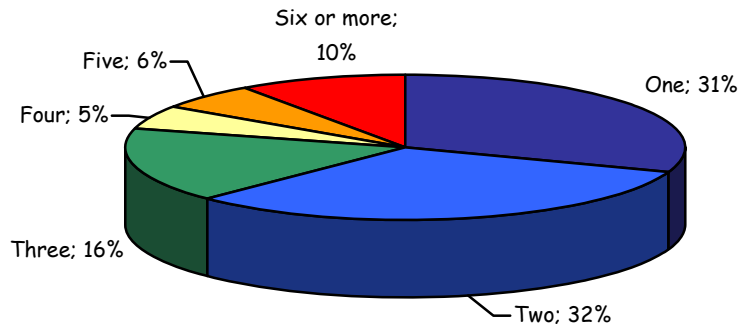
There were differences in likelihood of reporting recent sunburn:

- Men (38.1%) were more likely than women (26.3%) to report a recent sunburn
- Whites (37.3%) were three times more likely than non-whites (11.7%) to report a sunburn.
- Adults under age 45 (42.8%) were twice as likely as older adults (21.7%) to report a sunburn.
- Adults with an annual income of \$35,000 or more (36.7%) had a *68% greater rate* of sunburn than adults with less income (21.8%).
- Adults who had more than a high school education (i.e., some college, college degree) (34%) had a *23% greater rate* of sunburn than adults with a high school degree or less (27.7%).

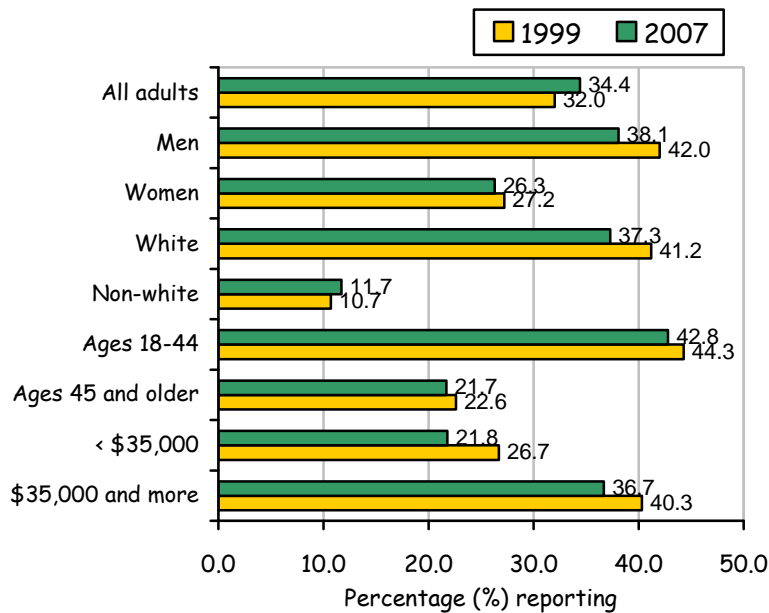
<sup>1</sup> Virginia Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2007. Percentages are population-weighted. Respondents were asked "have you had a sunburn within the past 12 months?"

## Excess Sun Exposure... (continued)

**Figure 2 - Number of sunburns in past year among adults, Virginia, 2007**



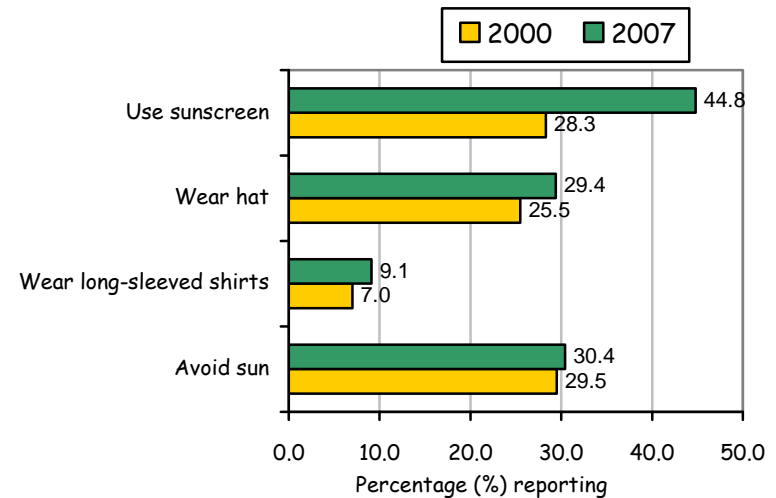
**Figure 3 - Prevalence of recent sunburn among adults, Virginia, 1999 vs. 2007**



## Sun Protective Behaviors

Three of five (59.6%) adults "always" or "nearly always" use at least one sun protective strategy. The most commonly (44.8%) reported behavior was use of sunscreen or sun block (Figure 4). Fewer adults said that they wear long-sleeved shirts, wear a hat, or avoid the sun altogether.<sup>2</sup> Comparisons to 2000 indicate that only sunscreen use increased over time (Figure 4) and increased among all demographic groups.

**Figure 4 - Participation in sun protective behaviors among adults, Virginia, 2000 vs. 2007**



<sup>2</sup> Virginia BRFSS, 2007. Based on responses of "always" or "nearly always" to question of how often they used measures when "outside on a sunny summer day for more than an hour".