Melanoma Awareness Month 2025: In Case You Missed It

This Melanoma Awareness Month, “SPF” took on a new meaning: Save, Protect, Fund Melanoma Research.

June 13, 2025 By Melanoma Research Alliance

This May, the entire melanoma community came together to recognize Melanoma Awareness Month. We had the opportunity to hear from leaders in the field, connect with other advocates, and spread awareness of melanoma and the importance of prevention, early detection, and sustained research investments.

In case you missed any of it, we have recapped MRA’s Melanoma Awareness Month programming below.

SPF: Save, Protect, Fund Melanoma Research

This Melanoma Awareness Month, “SPF” took on a new meaning: Save, Protect, Fund Melanoma Research. Every new gift to the Melanoma Research Alliance in May was matched, and as always, 100% of donations went directly to life-saving research.

Gifts are only being matched through May 31st, but you can still help us reach our goal of $50,000 by making a gift.

MRA Announced $9.3M in 2025 Research Investments

In recognition of Melanoma Awareness Month, MRA, the largest non-profit funder of melanoma research, announced its 2025 grantee cohort. MRA-funded investigators represent the brightest minds working to advance melanoma prevention, timely diagnosis, and treatment.

2025 funding focus areas include: Rare Melanomas; Metastasis and Leptomeningeal Disease; Neoadjuvant/Adjuvant Treatments; Enhancing Anti-Tumor Immune Responses; & Improving Diagnostic, Predictive, and Prognostic Biomarkers!

Ask the Expert: All Things Tumor-Infiltrating Lymphocyte (TIL) Therapy

MRA had the pleasure of hosting Dr. Stephanie Goff, senior research physician in the Center for

Cancer Research at the National Cancer Institute (NCI), to discuss future research directions in TIL therapy on the Melanoma > Exchange as part of an Ask the Expert. Check out the discussion!

Breaking New Ground in the Fight Against Cancer

MRA's Chief Executive Officer Dr. Marc Hurlbert joined a panel of experts on May 6th as part of the Milken Institute's 2025 Global Conference for a panel discussion titled, "Breaking New Ground in the Fight Against Cancer."

Cancer continues to be one of the leading causes of death worldwide. By 2040, the number of new cancer cases is expected to reach nearly 30 million. With rapid advances in science and technology, invasive methods for diagnosing and surveilling cancers are being supplanted by innovative, non-invasive methods like liquid biopsy. How might these technologies disrupt current practices? This panel of experts will offer a look into the innovations on the horizon and a prediction of how these innovations will affect the future of cancer care.

Watch the recording!

MRA Meet-Up with Dermatologist Dr. David Polsky and Patient Advocate J.D. Durkin

On May 7th, MRA hosted another installment in the MRA Meet-Ups series, where we regularly connect with the melanoma community to discuss important topics, share insights and experiences, and ask questions. The session, called "Early Detection, Remote Telemedicine, and AI", featured perspectives and commentary from dermatologist Dr. David Polsky of NYU Langone and patient advocate and journalist J.D. Durkin.

Moderated by MRA's Director of Communications and Engagement Dana Deighton, the discussion focused on melanoma prevention and early detection, dermatological care and remote telemedicine, and the role of artificial intelligence (AI).

Watch the recording!

Weekly Sun Safety Giveaways

MRA is thrilled to be working with so many incredible brands focused on promoting sun safety, melanoma awareness, and research. Throughout May on our Instagram page, we gave away SPF Society bags full of goodies from our amazing partners! Here's who we were proud to work with this Melanoma Awareness Month:

- Bimini Bay Outfitters
- Daily Shade
- L'Oréal: La Roche Posay & CeraVe

- Mama Sol
- Melan
- SOL LABS
- Sqween
- Toadfish
- WATSKIN

Melanoma Story Swap

MRA hosted out annual May Melanoma Story Swap, a virtual interactive session where anyone touched by melanoma was invited to join, share their story, ask questions, and bask in the power and connection of the melanoma community. The event was hosted by MRA's Communications & Patient Engagement team Dana Deighton and Renee Orcione.

Melanoma: Know the Facts, Rare Subtypes, and What's New in Research

ResearchMatch and the Melanoma Research Alliance co-hosted a special webinar highlighting the latest advancements in melanoma research, treatment, and patient advocacy. The session featured expert insights from MRA's Chief Science Officer Dr. Joan Levy and Dr. Charlotte Ariyan of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, as well as powerful personal stories from melanoma patient advocates Leah Adams and Amy Jardon.

Watch the recording!

Ask the Expert: Prediction and Prevention

Dermatologist Dr. Allan Halpern of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center joined MRA at our 2025 Melanoma > Exchange Patient Forum in February. He gave a spectacular talk on the power of AI in melanoma detection, and he returned during Melanoma Awareness Month to answer questions in the Melanoma > Exchange community on Inspire from May 19th-23rd.

Watch his talk and see the discussion on the Melanoma > Exchange!

The Eye Patch Challenge and Ocular Melanoma Awareness Month

May was also Ocular Melanoma Awareness Month - a time to shine a light on this rare but serious melanoma subtype - and our friends at Eye on Grace Foundation are spearheading the Eye Patch Challenge through June 15th! Learn more about the challenge below and be a part of the movement!

Don’t Fry Day

Each year, the National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention designates the Friday before Memorial Day as “Don’t Fry Day” to raise awareness of skin cancer prevention and to encourage everyone to protect their skin as they head outdoors to kick off the summer season.

Learn more about Don’t Fry Day!

Do we take better care of our skin on vacation?

MRA recently surveyed more than 2,000 people about how they protect their skin and uncovered a troubling trend - while most Americans intend to practice sun safety, their habits tell another story:

- 4 in 10 Americans take better care of their skin when they travel than when at home.
- Less than half wear sunscreen more than sixty days a year (that leaves 305 days literally uncovered!).

MRA and Melanoma in the News

The Melanoma Research Alliance, our staff and board members, corporate and advocate partners, and experts we fund and collaborate with were featured in various ways throughout May.

- The 9 Best SPF Moisturizers for Men in 2025, According to Dermatologists
- Menacing Melanoma: Marc Hulbert, PhD on How You Can Fight Back
- Melanoma Awareness Month - NBC Daytime
- Blood Test to Predict Tumor Recurrence in Advanced Skin Cancer Called Highly Accurate
- How Often to Reapply Sunscreen, According to a Skin Cancer Expert
- Skin Savers: The Oprah Daily Sun O-wards 2025
- I Thought I Was Too Young to Get Melanoma
- We’re All Not Reapplying Sunscreen Enough. A Skin Cancer Expert Breaks Down Just How Often You Should
- Revolutionizing Sunscreen Formulations For Everyday Wear with SOL LABS
- Revving Up Melanoma Research at the CU Cancer Center
- Do We Take Better Care of Our Skin on Vacation?

- Melanoma Research Alliance Announces “The Paul Walks - MRA Young Investigator Award in Memory of Chad Johnson”
- Cancer Innovation in ‘Era of Fear’: New AI Tools Meet Old Access Barriers — and New Funding Cuts
- BucketGolf x Melan: Playing for a Cause this Skin Cancer Awareness Month

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