

No Pain, No Gain

The Removal of Sun Damaged Skin, a Personal Experience

By JACK MACKENZIE, CGCS
North Oaks Golf Club

OVERDONE IN THE SUN

Playing and eventually working upon a golf course through the 1960's, 70's and 80's initiated me to the joys that only the great outdoors could provide. Beautiful sunrises and an occasional rainbow were the backdrops to my perfect days of watching Mother Nature share her wonders. Little did I know that my long hours of enjoyment and employment under the sun were causing havoc to my skin.

As a youngster playing golf in the junior league, looping for members and eventually working on the green staff at the White Bear Yacht Club exposed my body to a daily dose of solar radiation. During my youthful years sun-bleached hair and tanned/burned skin was the norm. Sun protection consisted of Johnson's baby oil and the occasional visor.

It wasn't until I had reached the mature age of thirty-five that I became concerned about my annual sun exposure. Perhaps it was the pain of sunburn, but more likely the development of premature wrinkles and the formation of funny bumps upon my face, that made me take notice of my skin. For the last nine years I have been using a high number sun block a minimum of once, but more likely twice, each day.

Unfortunately a decade of remedy didn't reduce my "laugh lines" nor improve my dermal decline. It was time to recognize my skin deterioration and visit a dermatologist.

THESE ARE THE FACTS, JACK

After giving my face a cursory look and hearing my sun history, the doctor told me straight forward, "You have severe sun damage to your skin, primarily Actinic keratoses on your face, which are pre-cancerous lesion caused by sun exposure, and also a bit of squamous cell damage upon the backs of your hands and top of your ears." Oh oh, here we go!

The doctor gave me a pamphlet produced by DUSA Pharmaceuticals to educate me about sun's effect and skin cancer.

Succinctly put, "Actinic keratosis (AKs) are rough, scaly patches on the skin, caused by excessive exposure to the sun, that can sometimes progress into dangerous skin cancers. More than 5 million Americans live with these lesions, and far too many people ignore them, leaving them untreated. This can have serious consequences. Doctors estimate that 40% of all squamous cell carcinomas, the second leading cause of skin cancer deaths

in the United States, begin as AKs. And without performing a skin biopsy, it can be almost impossible for a doctor to distinguish an AK from a squamous cell carcinoma."

Furthermore, "Left untreated, squamous cell carcinomas may become larger, go deeper into the skin and eventually spread to other parts of the body."

This information threw me for a scare and I decided that immediate treatment would be prudent.

YOUR OPTION, PASS OR PLAY

Remedial options available today are varied and depend upon the extent of the skin damage. Small lesions can be removed with cryotherapy (freezing), dermabrasion or laser surgery. Individual cells or small groups of cells are destroyed one at a time under the practiced eye of a dermatologist. However, more extensive damage necessitates a more dramatic approach.

Two methods for the removal of AK's on a grander scale are the application of a cream form of chemotherapy or a process called Photo Dynamic Therapy. Both are intense.

5 fluorouacil, also called Efudex or Flurplex, is a chemotherapy lotion preferentially absorbed by the rapidly dividing and abnormal AK cells. The process, which can take up to ten weeks, kills the damaged cells gradually. The dead skin is then sloughed off in the treated areas.

Severe discoloration, open sores and dramatic skin loss are common occurrences. The process is quite physically painful and mentally distressing, as the patient's skin takes on signs similar to Leprosy. Most signs gradually disappear over time.

During the process the patient must remember that the discomfort of the treatment is directly proportional to the amount of damage upon the skin, the greater the number of precancerous and cancerous cells, the greater the effects from 5 fluorouacil. One other treatment is

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available.

Two years ago a new, quicker and more aggressive method was created for the removal of AK damage. Called Photo Dynamic Therapy, the two-part process uses chemicals and light exposure to kill the sun-damaged cells quickly and very efficiently.

The first step is the application of amino-levulinic acid HCl, a naturally occurring chemical, where it is absorbed only into the AK cells. This chemical becomes photo toxic to the AKs when exposed to blue light. Healthy cells are left unaffected. 12 to 24 hours following the chemical treatment, the conditioned skin is exposed to 16 minutes and 40 seconds of light treatment, which immediately disrupts the integrity of the AK cells. They literally blow apart.

The treatment can be very painful, again depending upon the amount of sun damage present. It does however have some advantages over the topical chemotherapy.

Timewise the physical discomfort and skin abnormality lasts about ten days, gradually disappearing. The treatment is much more effective and the process stimulates the formation of collagen, thus decreasing the appearance of wrinkles and imperfections.

After weighing the two general treatments I chose the faster PDT program. I figured that if I was to be in pain and disfigured, I might as well limit my discomfort as much as possible.

The afternoon that I received the chemical application my Doctor asked me, "Would you like some medication to take the edge off during and shortly after the procedure? Some of my patients have reported a slight stinging discomfort during the light phase." Not being big on taking any drugs I soberly declined.

BURN BABY, BURN

To be very honest, never in my life had I truly experienced physical pain until I underwent PDT. This statement isn't meant to scare anyone, nor distort the truth. But rather to emphasize the extent of sun damage I had upon my face. From the moment the 16 minute and 40 second



Jack MacKenzie, CGCS, shortly after a preventative facial treatment.

Blue light treatment began and the next 24 hours, the pain was barely tolerable. And as I rose from the procedure table, the question came again, "would you like some medication to ease the discomfort?".

"GIMME, GIMME, GIMME" WAS MY TEAR-FILLED RESPONSE

During the first day following the PDT, my skin swelled and turned the color of cranberries and I suffered incredible

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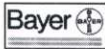
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torture. To sooth the discomfort of the dying lesions I took my medication, stood outside in the cold, hourly applied ice packs upon my face and, to my greatest relief, slathered the destroyed

"Even though I looked like I suffered from leprosy, the pain was gone and the irritation was minor. But the stares I received from curious onlookers made me appreciate and reflect upon what burn victims must tolerate on a daily basis."

skin with a topical aloe vera gel I had found in the medicine cabinet. Gradually, over the next three days, the redness and pain

went away, only to be replaced by a deep tan and itching and scaling skin. The damaged cells were now dead and sloughing off.

Even though I looked like I suffered from leprosy, the pain was gone and the irritation was minor. But the stares I received from curious onlookers made me appreciate and reflect upon what burn victims must tolerate on a daily basis. At my follow up visit one week after the therapy, my skin was pink and smooth.

IS THE RESULT WORTH THE PRICE?

PDT is a curative and preventative program. Perhaps the greatest result of the therapy was the fast and effective method of removing precancerous and cancerous cells from my face. This procedure should reduce greatly the chance for disfiguring surgery in the future.

My "new" skin will be easier to maintain in a healthy fashion because it has yet to be burned. I will keep it in good health by applying a quality sun block or sunscreen multiple times during the day. And finally, my mug got a chemical face lift. Not that I needed any beautification, but every little bit helps!

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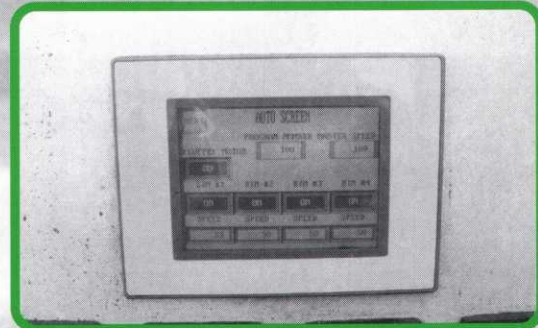
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U of M's "Classes Without Quizzes" Set for April 3

PROGRAM

8:30 a.m.
Registration

9:00 a.m.

Welcome Robert Freemore, President, College of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences Alumni Society

9:15 a.m.

Ending World Hunger During our Lifetime. Professor C. Ford Runge, Applied Economics bring a message, "Hunger can be Banished in Our Lifetime" and a plan. His latest book includes new findings and projections that show it can be done through renewed institutions, scientific innovation, global economics and investment, and sustainable environmental practices.

SESSION 1

10:00 a.m.
(Concurrent)

(A) Promoting Safe and Healthy Foods

Food Safety and Obesity: Everybody's Issue, Whose Responsibility? Food safety, obesity and health care costs are in the spotlight. Jean Kinsey from Applied Economics looks at the roles of private parties, public agencies, and education institutions.

(B) Improving Environmental Quality

From the U to You - The New Look of Renewable Power. A panel discusses the latest research on alternative energy such as turning biomass like perennials and organic matter on the ocean floor into fuel.

(C) Enhancing Agricultural Systems

Classroom Agriculture: Growing a Garden in a Glove Sue Anderson leads K-12 food systems literacy initiatives and trains teachers to use agriculture examples when teaching math and science. See her at work!

(D) Serving Urban Communities/Revitalizing Rural Communities

What People Really Want to Know - 27 Years Answering Garden Questions. Garden expert and columnist Deb Brown shares her favorite and most frequent questions (and answers!) from 27 years of sharing her expertise with Minnesota's gardeners.

SESSION 2

11:30 a.m.
(Concurrent)

(E) Promoting Safe and Healthy Foods

Prevention from Produce, Plants and Chronic Diseases. Gary Gardner from the Center for Plants and Human Health summarizes the latest research on cholesterol-lowering, cancer-preventing and virus-inhibiting properties of plants.

(F) Improving Environmental Quality

Low Maintenance & Alternative Lawns. What do "Ecology-Lawns" and "No-Mow Lawns" mean to you? Find out how you can reduce water and pesticide use with new grass combinations from Mary Meyer in Horticultural Science.

(G) Enhancing Agricultural Systems

Unsolved Mysteries: Preserving Shackleton's and Scott's Expedition Huts in Antarctica. Bob Blanchette is a Plant Pathologist who solves mysteries in places like the remains of Ernest Shackleton's famous Voyage in Antarctica to tombs in Ancient Turkey. He shares his techniques to solve biological mysteries.

(H) Serving Urban Communities/Revitalizing Rural Communities

Is Green Acres Really the Place to Be? Harmonizing Rural Economic and Lifestyle Goals. Minnesota's growing population and changing demographics are changing food production in this state. Brian Buhr from Applied Economics facilitates a panel discussing the economic, environmental and cultural challenges for the future of rural and urban communities.

12:45 p.m. - Lunch

Terrace Cafe, St. Paul Student Center

Dean Charles Muscoplat brings you up to date on how the College of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences is putting its priorities into action.

2:00 p.m.

Optional Tour of St. Paul Campus

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Session Preference:

Which classes are you likely to attend? Choose from below.

Session 1 A B C D Session 2 E F G H

It's in the Hole!

Hydrologic Wins Award As Top Flight Distributor

Rain Bird named Hydrologic Water Management Systems Inc. to its list of Top Flight Distributors for 2003. Hydrologic was one of a select few distributors in the United States to earn this distinctive honor. Hydrologic Distributes Rain Bird Golf Irrigation products in eight states in the Upper Midwest with 15 warehouse locations.

Brian Freeman Named National Salesman of the Year

Rain Bird also recently named Brian Freeman of Hydrologic Water Management Systems Inc. National Salesman of the Year at its annual distributor awards dinner. Brian works out of Hydrologic's Olathe, Kansas facility. Brian's hard work and dedication paid off in ways beyond words. We are very proud to have one of our own recognized nationally for his efforts.

New Arrivals

Pat and Trista Morstad announced the birth of their new daughter, **Marea Rose Morstad**. She was born on February 7th at 7 lbs., 13 ozs. Both Trista and Marea are very healthy. Patrick, Marea's 19-month old brother, is doing well, too. "I am very proud of my wife, son and daughter," says Pat, who is Superintendent at Stocker Lake Golf Course in Dalton, Minn. Pictured below is Patrick and his new sister.



Marea Rose Morstad and her brother Patrick

Owen Jeffrey Johnson was born on Saturday, January 17th at 5 pounds, 3 ozs. and 19 1/2" long. Owen is the son of Minikahda Superintendent Jeff Johnson

and his wife "baby and mother are doing great" says Jeff.



Owen Jeffrey Johnson

Mike & Laura Knodel are the proud parents for a second time with the birth of **Kylie Elizabeth Knodel** on February 3rd. She weighed 9 lbs. 7 oz. and measured 20-1/4" long. She is also welcomed home by her 5 year old sister, Alyssa. Mike is the Superintendent / General Manager at Oakdale Golf Club near Hutchinson.



Kylie Elizabeth Knodel

Kendra Kristine Provo was born on January 14th at 5 lbs., 12 ozs. and was 19 inches long. Kendra is the daughter of Barry and Kary Provo. Barry is the Superintendent at Deer Run Golf Club in Victoria.



Kendra Kristine Provo

Turf Supply and Milorganite Donate over \$11,000 To Turfgrass Research

Over the past six years Turf Supply Company, Milorganite and local superintendents have donated \$11,600 to the O.J. Noer Foundation, Wisconsin Turfgrass Association and The Troe Center at the University of Minnesota. These funds were raised by superintendents that purchased Milorganite through Turf Supply Company during the fall. Donations totaling \$1,530 were donated to the above organizations in 2003.

Crane Company Introduces Winter Protection System

Crane Creek introduces the only Green and Tee Box Winter Protection "System."

One of the largest investments and maintenance costs a golf course has is its greens and tee boxes. Crane Creek has designed a patent pending solution that will provide a versatile means of protecting this investment during the dormancy period. The Crane Creek system is a multi-layer system that will protect the green from the most damaging winter problems: ice build up; premature rehydration; wind desiccation, and crown stress.

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This three-layer system prevents moisture from building up on the greens and tee boxes, which will freeze and severely damage the turf. It also promotes air movement across the green and tee boxes, keeping the straw dry and wicking properties active, which prevents the possibility of damaging mold build up.

The top layer can also be used alone for greens that need protection from wind and ice build up, similar to other single layer systems.

Benefits listed are a result of tests on selected golf courses and meetings from superintendents in northern states: Increased golfer satisfaction; increased golfer loyalty; avoid green and tee box repair from ice damage and wind desiccation.; early opening; less spring preparation and maintenance; no temporary green construction, and eliminates waste via custom fitted covers.



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In Bounds

By Jack MacKenzie, CGCS
North Oaks Golf Club

Man, oh man, do I hate to be sick. Ever since giving up the booze eight years ago, and thus eliminating my propensity for looking, acting and feeling like a beaten dog the day after my bouts, I have developed intolerance for illness. Sickness equates to down time and I don't have time in my life to be down.

In fact I am the kind of guy who declines the friendly hand shake in church and at social gatherings during the flu season. And nor will I share a cold. Typically I don't swap skin with a vendor or an acquaintance while I am harboring a pathogen, that is unless I don't like them.

When I was a youngster I used to get the flu, a twenty-four hour bug that purged my system of all liquids and made me eligible for a 7-up and Saltines diet. Today I get a flu shot, a pre treatment which in theory reduces the likelihood of two weeks of chills, high fever, runny nose, achy body and loss of appetite. And as a bonus if I am good, I receive a sticker announcing to the world that once again I was duped into giving up more biographical information to the government. It is all a conspiracy, you know! And why does the flu last thirteen days or more, longer than it did when I was a kid?

Will I still get sick? Who knows, but I guarantee you that at the first sign of a cold I will be reaching for my Zicam. This material, placed into the nasal passage as a spray or gel, has, for me, limited the duration of influenza. And for the last year I have been extremely impressed with the Zicam program.

During a visit to my chiropractor in February of 2003, an advertisement caught my eye. A product, Zicam, touted limiting the effects of colds. Having suffered a long bout of the flu the previous October, I was curious and read the literature. Although I found it interesting, my primary mission of the day was to get my butt massaged to reduce sciatic pressure down my leg.

Two weeks later however both of my children brought a "nasty" home with them from school. Of course in short order I too was developing a slightly runny nose and just a shadow of a throat tickle. "Damn," I thought, "I am getting a cold." Hating to be sick, and remembering the Zicam ad, encouraged me to go immediately to the pharmacy and purchase some. I chose the gel and promptly began the therapy.

The following two days my cold symptoms became progressively worse. A strong cough, headache, nausea and general rotten feeling nagged me for 48 hours. And through it all I continued to take my Zicam. On the morning of the third day my cold was regressing and on the fourth day it was gone and I was back to my normal unusual self.

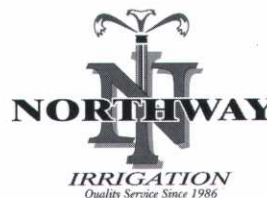
A miracle? I doubt it. Psychosomatic? Perhaps, but I really didn't care. I had found my magical mystery cure. A one time fluke? Not hardly.

Last fall, two day before heading to Madeline Island with my family for a mini-

retreat, I got a sniffle. Again I purchased some Zicam and found relief just two days later after suffering a "micro-cold." Indeed once again the Zicam reduced the duration of my malady.

No I am not invested in the company that produces Zicam. Rather I just hate to be sick and am selfish when it comes to my health. If by sharing this information my peers can limit their colds, my exposure and potential to become sick will be reduced as well.

So please don't be offended if I choose not to shake your hand or violate your personal space when I see your nose running or hear phlegm trying to escape up your throat. For you see, I am a hypochondriac and I just don't have time to be sick. - JM



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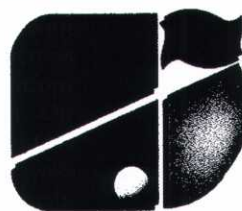
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