



THE STATE OF BRITAIN'S SKIN: SIXTY PERCENT OF BRITISH PEOPLE HAVE SUFFERED FROM SKIN DISEASE & EIGHTY-FIVE PERCENT ADMIT TO GETTING SUNBURNT

Sixty percent of British people currently suffer from or have suffered from a skin disease at some point during their lifetime according to a new survey revealed at the *British Skin Foundation's Skin Deep – 20 Years of Research* conference on 13th October in London.

The British Skin Foundation, the only UK charity that funds research into all types of skin disease, surveyed the public on their skin health as the charity celebrates 20 years of raising money for research.

The survey covered all skin conditions from the most common through to the potentially deadly. For instance 28% of the population admitted to suffering from acne at some stage. Of those, some 39% admit they don't know how to handle it. **Consultant Dermatologist Dr Anjali Mahto** says:

"Acne is a treatable skin disease and it is important to seek help early. No one should have to suffer in silence and early access to your family doctor or dermatologist is key. Although not life-threatening, the damage acne can cause should not be underestimated. It can lead to scarring of the skin in addition to having profound effects on self-esteem. It is important to deal with these at an early stage to prevent lasting physical and psychological effects."

Seven in ten people have visible scars or visible skin conditions, with 72% of this group saying it affects their confidence.

"Statistics like this remind us just how much skin conditions and scars can affect everyday life by crushing people's confidence. Rather than let skin problems rule lives, put strains on relationships and eat away at self-esteem, our goal is to fund as much research as possible to try and help those with skin issues," explains **Lisa Bickerstaffe, British Skin Foundation spokesperson.**

Of the population as a whole, 14% of people confessed that they feel uncomfortable if they see someone with a visible skin condition or scar.

"Another one of our key aims is to educate people who don't suffer from skin conditions or scars. Education through the media and online is key to help others understand that those with skin issues should not be overlooked or feared," adds **Bickerstaffe.**

When revealing their behaviour in the sun, alarmingly **85% of people admitted to being sun burnt three times or more in their lifetime.** One in ten also confessed that they don't wear SPF 30 or more when abroad, and more than a fifth of people admitted to forgetting to reapply sunscreen every two hours or after swimming on holiday.

Press release

EMBARGOED UNTIL 13/10/16

Consultant Dermatologist, Dr Emma Wedgeworth warns, *“Sunburn isn’t just a nuisance, it’s a warning. We know that just five or more sunburns in your life can double your risk of melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer. We are living longer and travelling more than ever before so we need to look after our skin from an early age. Regular reapplication of sun cream, seeking shade and covering up can all significantly reduce the risk of sun damage and skin cancer.”*

Whilst there is a high percentage of people getting sun burnt, more positively, 80% are at least regularly checking their skin and moles, whilst encouraging their family to do the same.

Dr Bav Shergill, Consultant Dermatologist & Dermatological Surgeon explains, *“The best way to detect skin cancer is to check your skin regularly. Look out for moles or patches of skin that are growing, changing shape, developing new colours, inflamed, bleeding, crusting, red around the edges, particularly itchy or behaving unusually. Remember – if in doubt, get it checked straight away.”*

Matthew Patey, British Skin Foundation CEO says *“Our survey has shown that a high percentage of people are affected by skin disease during their lifetime, telling us that our work is just as essential today as it ever was twenty years ago. It illustrates that more research is needed to help people with all kinds of skin problems and we will keep raising money for research to find treatment and cures across all skin diseases, including skin cancer.”*

Notes to editors:

This British Skin Foundation survey was answered by UK residents in 2016. A total of 364 people answered the survey and respondents received no personal reward for completing.

About the BSF

The **British Skin Foundation** is the only UK charity dedicated to raising funds for skin disease and skin cancer research. Our unwavering commitment to funding quality research means we won’t stop until we’ve found cures for common skin problems like eczema and acne through to potential killers like malignant melanoma. This year the British Skin Foundation turns 20 years old – to date we’ve raised £15 million to fund research projects since 1996.

For further information please contact:

lisa@britishskinfoundation.org.uk or call 020 7391 6347

Find us online here:

www.britishskinfoundation.org.uk

www.facebook.com/leadingthefightagainstskindisease

www.twitter.com/bsfcharity

www.ittakesseven.org.uk

www.facebook.com/ittakes7

www.twitter.com/ittakes7

Summary of the British Skin Foundation survey:

- 43% of people surveyed say that the impact of their child's skin disease affects them and their family.
- 33% admitted that dealing with their child's skin disease affects their daily routine.
- 60% of people surveyed have had treatment from a health professional for a skin condition.
- 65% of people think that their skin looks good for their age.
- 84% of people use daily skin care products.
- 82% of people look for an SPF when buying skin care products or make-up.

This British Skin Foundation survey was answered by UK residents in 2016. A total of 364 people answered the survey and respondents received no personal reward for completing.