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NEWS 17



THE SUN CANCER STATE

Queensland has the highest regional rate of melanoma in the world

■ **71 cases per 100,000** people

■ **3600 annual** diagnoses

■ **390** Queenslanders die from skin cancer each year

PLAYING IT SAFE: Samantha Lazarus, 7, Bailey Nel, 5, and Eva Anderson, 8, enjoying the day at Miami Beach. Picture: Adam Head

SPOT THE KILLER TO BEAT CANCER

JANELLE MILES

ONE of the mysteries of melanoma will come under close scrutiny from a new Queensland-based research centre to be launched today.

Some of the world's leading skin cancer experts will focus on why some moles turn into the deadly

cancer and others never become a problem.

The centre, to be based at the Translational Research Centre in Brisbane, will be led by Professor Peter Soyer, director of the Dermatology Research Centre at the University of

Queensland.

Prof Soyer said the centre would be the first of its kind dedicated to investigating moles, known medically as naevi, and their relationship with melanoma.

"Most melanomas grow

adjacent to or within moles on the skin," he said. "We know that many of these spots and moles will never become a problem for people. But some do and it's still a mystery for us to know which of these naevi may become a problem."



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He said the new Centre for Research Excellence for the Study of Naevi – a collaboration between UQ, the Cancer Council Queensland, QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute, Queensland University of Technology and the University of Sydney – would allow scientists to systematically study how moles changed over a lifetime.

“Our work will document the naevus life cycle and how this varies according to age, sex and body site and will assist Queenslanders in self-skin exam-

ination,” Prof Soyer said. Although New Zealand has recently overtaken Australia as the country with the highest melanoma rates in the world, Queensland still has the highest regional rate at about 71 cases per 100,000 people.

Cancer Council Queensland spokeswoman Katie Clift said helping people better understand what to look for on their skin was crucial to detecting melanoma early.

The centre will have input from leading cancer experts including QIMR

Berghofer’s Professor Adele Green, who was the first scientist to establish the role daily sunscreen use plays in reducing the risk of melanoma.

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new drugs
have given one
man another
chance at life**

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QWEEKEND**