

## **Moisturizers are linked to skin cancer in mice**

4:00 PM, August 14, 2008

A new study has found a link between several popular moisturizers and non-melanoma skin cancer in mice. But it's too early to tell if this is another needless public health scare or if, indeed, the substances in at least some creams can do more harm than good.

Scientists from Rutgers University applied four skin creams to hairless mice that were at high risk for developing skin cancer anyway. Tumor formation increased 69% in the mice that had been moisturized once a day, five days a week for 17 weeks. The creams used in the study included Dermabase, Dermovan, Eucerin and Vanicream.

The authors of the study, which was published online today in the Journal of Investigative Dermatology, say they can't conclude that moisturizers cause skin cancers in humans. But, according to a story by the Associated Press, lead author Allan Conney said the study raises important questions.

"I think it raises a red flag indicating that there's a need to determine whether or not these products could cause this problem in people."

The AP story on the study also quoted several leading dermatologists who cast doubt on the association.

"The components in moisturizers are tested. There's no evidence for this being a problem in humans, " said Dr. Steven Feldman, professor of dermatology at Wake Forest University.

Moisturizers are not sunscreens, and studies have shown that using sunscreen helps prevent skin cancer. At least we can be sure of that.

-- Shari Roan