MRF Melanoma Research Foundation





This month, we recognized **National Nonprofit Day** — a powerful reminder of the critical role nonprofit organizations play in driving change, providing support and advancing life-saving research.

Among the countless nonprofits making a difference, advocacy organizations hold a unique and vital place. They are the voice for the voiceless, the catalysts for systemic change and the champions for communities often overlooked. Their work influences policy, raises awareness, educates the public and pushes forward the kind of progress that can't always be measured — but is always deeply felt.

The Melanoma Research Foundation (MRF) - the largest independent patient advocacy organization devoted to the eradication of melanoma – is a 4-star 96% Charity Navigator rated nonprofit with a mission to accelerate medical research while educating and advocating for the melanoma community.

The MRF is committed to:

- **Advancing scientific research** that fosters collaboration, drives innovation and leads to more clinical trials, treatments and more options and hope for patients. To date, the MRF has awarded 335 research grants totaling over $26 million to medical students, residents/fellows, young and established investigators and more.
- Supporting patients and caregivers throughout their journey with free resources such as

educational materials, virtual webinars, hybrid patient symposia and animated patient videos through our **Education Institute**. In 2025, we have provided over 12,000 educational materials to patients, caregivers, clinicians and more!

- Raising awareness about melanoma prevention, early detection and the risks associated with cutaneous melanoma through our award-winning **#GetNaked melanoma awareness month campaign.** We raise awareness for the melanoma subtypes through our #EyeGetDilated ocular melanoma awareness campaign, #OutOfTheShadows mucosal melanoma awareness campaign and #SpotTheDog pediatric/AYA melanoma awareness campaign. **Melanoma Awareness – Melanoma Research Foundation**
- **Advocating** for policy change that increases funding for research and ensures equitable access to care.

Melanoma is one of the deadliest forms of skin cancer claiming the lives of nearly 8,430 Americans each year, and its incidence is rising. But with organizations like the MRF leading the fight, there is hope — backed by science, community and an unwavering commitment to saving lives.

How can you help? Consider supporting the MRF whether by making a tax-deductible donation, volunteering or simply spreading the word, your support fuels progress.

Learn How to Help

Kyleigh LiPira, MBA

CEO

Creating a Legacy That Lasts: National Make-A-Will Month



As National Make-a-Will Month comes to a close, we hope you take a moment to consider supporting the MRF's critical mission and efforts to eradicate all forms of melanoma in your estate plans. Creating a will may feel daunting, but it's one of the most meaningful ways to protect the people and causes you care about most. A will is more than just a document — it's a powerful act of love to create a legacy that guarantees your wishes are honored.

Many generous supporters have already included the MRF in their estate plans, fueling groundbreaking research, providing critical patient resources and driving progress toward a cure. By doing the same, you can help sustain our fight against melanoma.

Among those who have pledged to support innovation and a dedication to a world without melanoma are Rob and Sandra Abbott, who shared this deeply personal reflection:

"The unforeseen loss of our son, Etai, at just 33, to an aggressive form of metastatic melanoma — despite pursuing every available treatment — inspired us to include the MRF in our estate plans. We hope our gift will contribute to a cure and spare another family the heartbreak of losing a loved one far too soon. For us, it's not about how he passed — it's about how he lived."

The Abbott's meaningful gift will make a lasting difference — and yours can, too. To make the process easier, the MRF has partnered with FreeWill, a free and trusted resource that helps you create a legally valid will in just 20 minutes. Learn more here, and if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to Dave Wiemer, Director of Philanthropy at dwiemer@melanoma.org.

Start my Free Will

Education Corner



Explore Our New Acral Melanoma Webpage and Resource Center!

Acral melanoma is a rare form of melanoma that develops on the hands, feet or under the nails—areas not typically exposed to the sun. In the US, 2,000–3,000 people are diagnosed each year, representing about 1–3% of all melanoma cases. It is more common in people with darker skin tones.

The MRF is committed to supporting the acral melanoma community by providing free educational resources and supportive services such as our Ask-a-Nurse program to empower those facing this diagnosis. We also support innovative research that leads to clinical trials and FDA approved treatment options for acral melanoma patients through the MRF's grant program. Our new webpages highlight symptoms of acral melanoma, diagnosis, treatment options and patient support tools. Explore them below!

Learn More About Acral Melanoma

Ask the Expert: Pediatric Melanoma - Early Detection, Unique Presentations & Prevention

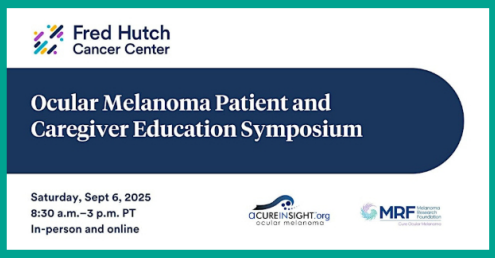


September is childhood cancer awareness month and at the MRF we aim to raise awareness and provide resources for the pediatric and AYA melanoma community through our #SpotTheDog campaign. During our pediatric/AYA melanoma month campaign, we invite you to join the next installment of our Ask the Expert webinar series entitled, "Pediatric Melanoma – Early Detection, Unique Presentations & Prevention". This webinar will be held on Thursday, September 25 from 7:00-8:00pm ET with Dr. Maria Buethe, Division Chief of Dermatology at Children's Hospital of Orange County (CHOC) and Director of Pediatric Dermatology at the University of California, Irvine.

The session will uncover how melanoma can present in children and teens, which symptoms warrant further evaluation and practical steps families and clinicians can take to support early detection and prevention.

Register Today

Upcoming Ocular Melanoma Patient and Caregiver Symposium – Fred Hutch Cancer Center



The MRF's CURE OM initiative will be attending and sharing resources at the upcoming Fred Hutch Cancer Center Ocular Melanoma Patient and Caregiver Education Symposium on Saturday, September 6 from 8:30 am – 3:00 pm PT, offered both online and in person.

This free educational event will feature leading ocular melanoma experts to discuss diagnosis, treatment options, advancements in surgical and radiation oncology, immunotherapies, research updates and supportive care resources for OM patients and caregivers.

Learn More and Register Now



ONE MONTH AWAY: Secure Your Tickets for the Denver Gala!

We're officially less than ONE MONTH away from the 14th Annual Denver Gala on Thursday, September 18 at our new location, Asterisk Denver! This year's Gala will spotlight remarkable leaders and heroes in the melanoma community. Iovance Biotherapeutics will be honored with the Corporate Leadership Award for their groundbreaking work in melanoma treatment and research. The MRF will also recognize Lori A. Crane, PhD, MPH with the Excellence in Prevention Award for her unwavering commitment to melanoma prevention. In addition, we will celebrate the strength and courage of Jennifer Melahn, Clarke Octigan and Terry Tucker, and honor Martin McCarter, MD with the Humanitarian Award for his extraordinary dedication to patient care, cutting-edge research and scientific leadership. Guests will enjoy an unforgettable evening featuring a cocktail reception, open bar, gourmet dinner and an inspiring awards program that shines a light on the progress and resilience of our melanoma community.

Purchase a Ticket or Sponsorship

Countdown to the 24th Annual New York Gala!



Don't wait, the 24th Annual New York Gala is almost here! On Thursday, October 30, join us for an unforgettable evening featuring cocktails, gourmet dining, an exciting auction and an inspiring awards program — all supporting the fight against melanoma. This year's event will be emceed by Jason Chambers, Superyacht Captain, TV personality, melanoma patient and advocate, making it a night you won't want to miss. Tickets are nearly sold out and sponsorship opportunities are closing soon. Secure your place today to stand with the melanoma community and help fund life-saving research and patient support.

Purchase a Ticket or Sponsorship



Miles for Melanoma: Summer Success, Fall Momentum

We're nearly halfway through the Miles for Melanoma 5K season, and August proved to be an unforgettable month. Across Cleveland, Twin Cities and Philadelphia, our communities came together in powerful ways — and each event surpassed its fundraising goal. Cleveland raised over $163,600, Twin Cities brought in more than $60,600 and Philadelphia rallied to raise over $137,000. These milestones not only celebrate the strength of our melanoma community but also fuel critical research, patient support and advocacy efforts. To relive the excitement, check out our Cleveland highlight video here and watch as Philadelphia was featured on CBS!

Get ready — our fall Miles for Melanoma 5Ks are right around the corner! We'll be hitting the pavement in New York (Sept 13), New Jersey (Sept 21), Seattle (Oct 4), Los Angeles (Oct 5), San Diego (Oct 18), Atlanta (Nov 2) and San Francisco (Nov 16). Don't miss your chance to be part of these inspiring events that unite patients, survivors, caregivers and supporters in the fight against melanoma. Register today, rally your team and take advantage of exciting fundraising incentives that make every step count. Together, we can move closer to a future without melanoma.

Register Now

Get Ready for the 5th Annual #GetNakedJax



The 5th Annual #GetNakedJax, presented by Dream Finders Homes, returns on Thursday, October 16 at the TPC Sawgrass Lawn in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL!

More than just an event, #GetNakedJax is a movement – uniting the Jacksonville community with a shared commitment to end melanoma through research. What began with the goal of funding one research grant each year has grown into an extraordinary success story: in 2024 alone, over $230,000 was raised, directly supporting the MRF's Women in Science Melanoma Research Grant. Since 2021, this event has contributed more than $600,000 to life-changing melanoma research.

Guests will enjoy an unforgettable evening featuring cocktails, dinner, live entertainment and a vibrant community atmosphere – all while fueling progress in melanoma prevention, treatment and awareness.

Be sure to watch this video from event founder Jason Sessions, who shares his personal melanoma journey, the inspiration behind #GetNakedJax and what attendees can look forward to this year. To learn more, support the cause or purchase your ticket, click below.

Purchase a Ticket



Save the Date: 2026 Advocacy Days, March 1-3

Advocacy Days will return to Washington, DC on March 1–3. This impactful event brings together melanoma patients, caregivers, advocates and supporters from across the country to unite as one voice on Capitol Hill. By sharing personal stories and meeting directly with lawmakers, our advocates help advance critical policies that support melanoma research, prevention and access to care.

Registration will open soon! **Sign up here to be the first to hear about** how you can be part of this powerful movement for change.

Learn More

Upcoming Events

September 6: Robert J. Miller Oysterfest

September 13: New York Miles for Melanoma

September 18: 14th Annual Denver Gala

September 21: New Jersey Miles for Melanoma

September 25: Ask the Expert: Pediatric Melanoma: Early Detection, Unique Presentations and Prevention

October 4: Seattle Miles for Melanoma

October 5: Los Angeles Miles for Melanoma

October 16: 5th Annual #GetNakedJax

October 18: San Diego Miles for Melanoma

October 25: CURE OM Global Science Meeting

October 30: 24th Annual New York Gala

November 2: Atlanta Miles for Melanoma

November 16: San Francisco Miles

In the News

Danielle Lloyd gives health update as she undergoes second surgery for skin cancer - *Yahoo News*

Oysterfest celebrates a decade of melanoma awareness honoring the legacy of Robert J. Miller - *Tap into Soma*

Iovance's Amtagvi (lifileucel) Receives Health Canada Approval for Advanced Melanoma - *Iovance Biotherapeutics*

Riding For A Cause: Kami Bitting Tackles The Mongol Derby With Grit, Heart And Purpose - *The Baynet*

Miles for Melanoma runners surpass goal, raise over $130,000 and run through Philadelphia Zoo - *CBS News*

Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones reveals decade-long battle with Stage 4 cancer - *CBS News*

Industry experts demystify everything you need to know about sunscreen in the US, plus industry news - *Glossy*

AAD Survey: half of Gen Z got sunburned in 2024 - and many still don't know the risks - *American Academy of Dermatology Association*

Melanoma Strikes Men Harder - *American Academy of Dermatology*



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