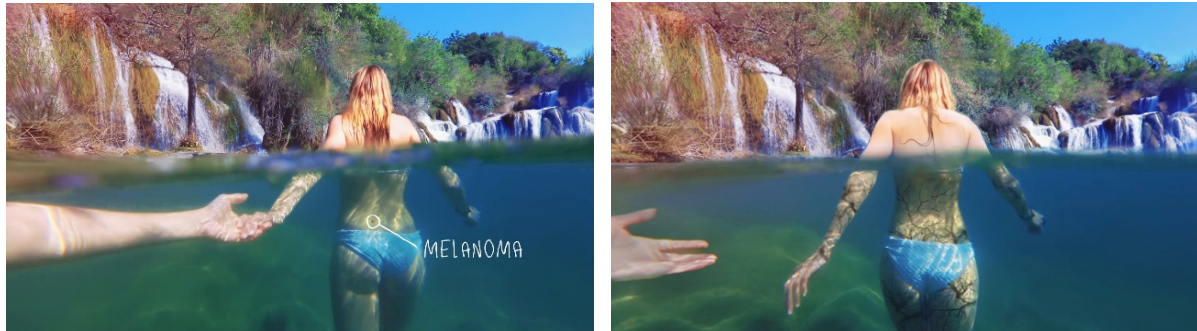


Millennials ignorant about melanoma

Dutch Melanoma Foundation starts awareness campaign Discover Your Spot



Photos: stills from the 'Discover Your Spot' video campaign of the Melanoma Foundation

Utrecht, 3 July 2018 - The knowledge of Dutch millennials about melanoma is significantly lower than that of the rest of the Dutch population. This while melanoma is in the top 3 of the most common forms of cancer in young people. One in three millennials (18-38 years) does not know what a melanoma is, compared to one in five Dutch people aged 38 and over. This is shown by research by the Dutch Melanoma Foundation (Stichting Melanoom). Also, over 60% do not adequately check the skin themselves for suspicious spots, while the chances of survival are much higher with early detection. To make young people more aware of the importance of regularly checking the skin, the Dutch Melanoma Foundation starts the international campaign *Discover Your Spot*.

Every year more and more Dutch people are told that they have melanoma - the most aggressive and deadly form of skin cancer. In 2017 6,743 people in The Netherlands received this diagnosis. With early detection, the chance of survival is almost 100%, but a melanoma spreads relatively quickly and survival with metastatic melanoma is very limited. "Regular (self) check of the skin is important, but we notice that there is still a lot of ignorance about melanoma and especially among young people. They underestimate the dangers of unprotected sunbathing and the use tanning beds. They also often do not realize that the skin damage they now incur increases their chances of melanoma and other forms of skin cancer in later life," says Dr. Nicole Kukutsch, dermatologist at the Skin Cancer Center of the LUMC and member of the Advisory Board of the Dutch Melanoma Foundation.

Undiscovered spots

With the summer campaign Discover Your Spot, the Dutch Melanoma Foundation wants to change that. The focal point of the campaign is an appealing video with a strong summer holiday feeling. At first the viewer thinks that the video revolves around a couple who discover a very nice vacation spot, but then comes the confronting turn. Discover Your Spot is actually about a suspicious spot, a melanoma, on the skin of the girl in the video. She ignores the spot and does not visit a doctor. This is fatal, while the chance of survival is very large if you are on time.

At the end of the video the viewer is sent to the campaign site of the Dutch Melanoma Foundation: www.stichtingmelanoom.nl/discoveryourspot. There they can find the checklist with six points that you

should pay attention to. Think of growth or emergence of a mole, but also the regular bleeding or itching of it. The campaign - which is supported and shared by melanoma organizations worldwide - should ensure that young people check their skin more often and take action faster if they have discovered a suspicious spot.

Less urgency among young people

Lotte (23 years old) never thought that she could get melanoma. "I always loved sunbathing and did not think about the consequences. My boyfriend noticed a strange mole at one point. It is only after a long urging of him that I went to the doctor. It turned out to be a melanoma. I ended up in a rollercoaster of uncertainty and operations. Fortunately, I am doing well now and I am especially happy that my boyfriend was so alert. "

Dermatologists advise to check your skin regularly for suspicious spots. Besides the fact that millennials check their skin too little, 22% of them have no idea what to look for when checking the skin. Also striking is the fact that the younger group of millennials (up to 30 years) have their skin the least often checked by a doctor – a bit more than 20% of them do that sometimes, against more than a third of the Dutch population as a whole. This is shown by research by the Dutch Melanoma Foundation among 1,088 Dutch people aged 18 and older.

Many Dutch people are still ignorant

The awareness campaigns of the Dutch Melanoma Foundation and parties like KWF (The Dutch Cancer Society) and Huidfonds from recent years seem to have had an effect. The percentage of 20- to 50-year-olds indicating to know what a melanoma is has increased significantly: from 63% in 2016 to 71% in 2018. This is evidence of growing awareness of melanoma in The Netherlands. Yet there are still many misconceptions.

That is why, in addition to the video campaign, the Dutch Melanoma Foundation 'zooms in' on the facts and fables surrounding melanoma via its social media channels.

- More than a fifth (22%) of the respondents think - incorrectly - that the use of aftersun after exposure to the sun reduces the chances of melanoma.
- Nearly 58% of the respondents have no idea that melanoma is in the top 3 of cancers most common among young people.
- A third of the respondents do not know that a melanoma can spread to other spots on the skin.
- Almost half of the respondents do not know that a melanoma can spread to other parts of the body besides the skin.
- Almost half of the respondents do not know that a melanoma can spread quickly.
- 28% of the Dutch people do not know that skin cancer is the strongest growing form of cancer worldwide.

For those who want to know more about the campaign, go to:

www.stichtingmelanoom.nl/discoveryourspot

About the Dutch Melanoma Foundation

The Dutch Melanoma Foundation has been the patient organization for people with skin and eye melanoma since 1995. The mission of the Dutch Melanoma Foundation: less melanoma and more recovery. The core tasks are information provision, prevention, patient advocacy and contact with fellow patients. In 2017, more than 6,700 people in The Netherlands were diagnosed with melanoma. This number has been rising for years and is affecting more and more young people.

END OF PRESS RELEASE

For more information and / or images:

Joost Morel

De Wolven

joost@dewolven.com

+31 (0)20 – 620 3354