

- February - Greatest chance of snow
- Winter Driving
- Friendly February
- Webinar - Delia Sworn
- AGM 2024
- Melanoma Institute Australia
- Test to predict spread/return of Melanoma
- Buddies report
- And more.....

## February

### Greatest statistical chance of Snow

For most parts of the United Kingdom, Christmas is only at the beginning of the period when it's likely to snow. We are much more likely to see snow between January and March than in December.

On average snow, or sleet falls 3.9 days in December, compared to 5.3 days in January, 5.6 days in February and 4.2 days in March.

Did you know that you are more likely to have a White Easter than a White Christmas?

### 6 things you probably didn't know about snow

#### 1. It doesn't have to be freezing to snow

In most cases the air temperature will be at or below freezing for snow to fall, but if rain falls continuously through air with a temperature as high as 6 °C, it could cause the air temperature to fall low enough for the rain to turn to snow.

#### 2. The speed of snow

Most snow falls at a speed of between 1 - 4 mph depending on the individual snowflake's mass and surface area, as well as the environment it's falling in.

#### 3. The first snowflake picture was taken in 1885

The first person to capture a photograph of a snowflake was Wilson Bentley, a farmer from the small town of Jericho in Vermont. During his lifetime he photographed more than 5,000.

#### 4. 'Chionophobia' means a fear of snow

It is often thought that the fear stems from childhood events, such as a sledding accident or being hit by a snowball.

#### 5. The Inuit language has 53 different words for snow

Recent studies suggest that the dialect spoken in Nunavik, Canada, has many more words for snow than in English. The language uses different words to describe different kinds of snow, for example 'pukak' to refer to crystal-like snow that looks like salt; 'matsaaruti' meaning wet snow to ice a sleigh's runners; and 'qanik' to refer to falling snow.

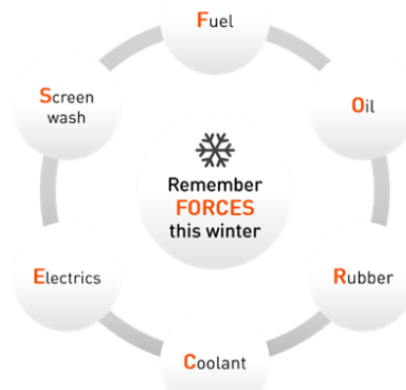
#### 6. Where is the deepest snow in UK?

The deepest snow ever recorded in a UK area where people live, was in Ruthin in North Wales where a snow depth of 1.65 metres was recorded. That's almost as tall as the height of the average person!





## Winter Driving



The RAC recommends using the acronym 'FORCES' to remember the simple winter checks:

### 1. F – Fuel

It may sound obvious but ensure you have enough fuel for your journey – it is a good idea to fill-up before setting off. Cars use more fuel in heavy traffic and start/stop conditions which can be regular occurrences, especially in wintry weather. And if the weather changes and it takes longer than you expect you could encounter problems.

### 2. O – Oil

Check your oil level using the dip stick and top-up if necessary – check your handbook if you are unfamiliar with how to do this and to ensure you use the correct oil.

### 3. R – Rubber

#### Check your tyre tread depth and air pressure

Remember that well-maintained tyres are vital to give you traction and grip on icy, wet surfaces. Your car's recommended tyre pressure can be found either in your car's manual or inside the driver's door.

The legal tyre tread depth for cars in the UK and Europe is 1.6mm. Check your tyre tread depth using either a tyre gauge, the marker bars on your tyre or a 20 pence coin. If you can't see the outer band of the 20p your tyres are within the legal limit. The RAC recommends changing your tyres before they get to the low limit and ideally a minimum tread depth of 3mm in icy or very wet conditions.

#### Check your wiper blades

In winter your windscreen can get a very dirty from rain, snow, ice and road salt. Maintaining good visibility is always imperative so check your wipers are doing the job by spraying some washer fluid and checking they clean the windscreen. Then get out of the car and run your fingers along the length of the blades to check for splits. It's recommended to change wiper blades every 12 months.

### 4. C – Coolant

Coolant (a mixture of water and antifreeze) is pumped around your engine to cool it. You should regularly check your engine coolant level and top-up if required. Remember only check this when the engine is cool otherwise you risk scalding yourself. It's not normal for coolant levels to drop suddenly, so if it does, get it checked out at a garage. You should find the coolant is between the min/max marks on the side of the tank.

### 5. E – Electrics

Check your lights and indicators are all working properly and replace bulbs or fuses if required. Battery problems are the reason for more RAC call-outs in winter than anything else. Car batteries need replacing every few years (according to usage) so make sure you get yours checked at your car service.

### 6. S – Screen wash

Make sure you top up your screenwash with a product that is effective down to at least -15 degrees Celsius. This additive helps to keep the windscreen free of ice and dirt, particularly the winter road grime caused by road salting and gritting which can cause visibility issues. There is also the risk of a frozen windscreen which is another reason to ensure you use a proper anti-freeze screen wash.

## Friendly February

Be friendly to others and give your relationships a boost.

Friendly February 2024

MONDAY



5 Make time to have a friendly chat with a neighbour

12 Focus on being kind rather than being right

19 Share something you find inspiring, helpful or amusing

26 Make uninterrupted time for your loved ones

TUESDAY



6 Get back in touch with an old friend you've not seen for a while

13 Smile at the people you see and brighten their day

20 Make a plan to connect with others and do something fun

27 Call a friend to catch up and really listen to them

WEDNESDAY



7 Show an active interest by asking questions when talking to others

14 Tell a loved one or friend why they are special to you

21 Really listen to what people say, without judging them

28 Give positive comments to as many people as possible today

THURSDAY

1 Send a message to let someone know you're thinking of them

8 Share what you're feeling with someone you really trust

15 Support a local business with a positive online review or friendly message

22 Give sincere compliments to people you talk to today

29 Acknowledge someone's problem or pain rather than trying to fix it

FRIDAY

2 Ask a friend how they have been feeling recently

9 Thank someone and tell them how they made a difference for you

16 Check in on someone who may be struggling and offer to help

23 Be gentle with someone who you feel inclined to criticise

SATURDAY

3 Do an act of kindness to make life easier for someone

10 Look for good in others, particularly when you feel frustrated with them

17 Appreciate the good qualities of someone in your life

24 Tell a loved one about the strengths that you see in them

SUNDAY

4 Invite a friend over for a 'tea break' (in person or virtual)

11 Send an encouraging note to someone who needs a boost

18 Respond kindly to everyone you talk to today, including yourself

25 Thank three people you feel grateful to and tell them why



ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

Happier · Kinder · Together



To view copy & paste the link below to your browser

[https://youtu.be/Ygn3NyeuA\\_I](https://youtu.be/Ygn3NyeuA_I)



**A Warm Welcome to Delia Sworm.  
Delia is well known to most of us and she  
has had a busy year in her new role as  
Advanced Clinical Practitioner.**

**She will talk to us about what the new  
role involves and the work she is  
undertaking to achieve her Masters  
Degree.**

**Delia is a natural speaker and I can  
guarantee you will enjoy her talk and she  
enjoys answering all questions.**

**Wed 21st February 7pm to 8pm**





## PENULTIMATE ADVANCE WARNING

### St Luke's Cancer Centre Melanoma Support Group

Website: [www.melanomore.net](http://www.melanomore.net) E-mail: [group@melanomore.net](mailto:group@melanomore.net)

## MELANOMORE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

**Tuesday 12th March 2024 starting at 6 pm via Zoom**

We shall be sending out the papers and a zoom invite for the AGM meeting by the 27th February. This will allow you to vote by email if you are unable to attend the meeting.

All applications to join the committee are most welcomed.

Our Chair Aga Kehinde will be in her 2nd year of tenure.

The positions of Treasurer & Committee Member (Neil Harrison), Committee Member & Events (Pam Walls), and Committee Member, Buddy Lead (Chris Caswell) have now completed their three year tenures and all will be applying for reselection.

Committee Member and Secretary, Sarah Pleass is now into her 2nd year of tenure.

Derrick Waterson was also voted on to the Committee last year

Gina Freeman and Doug Hollis also assist with fund raising and website support.

Additionally, two further Committee Members vacancies are required to be filled and this is your chance to be formally voted onto the Committee. For all those who are interested please contact us at the address below by 20th February.

**[group@melanomore.net](mailto:group@melanomore.net)**

## News From The World of Melanoma



## MELANOMA - 'AUSTRALIA'S NATIONAL CANCER'

Melanoma Institute Australia (MIA) is at the forefront of global advances in melanoma research and treatment. We are a non-profit organisation dedicated to preventing and curing melanoma through innovative, world-class research, treatment and education programs.

<https://melanoma.org.au/>

Our mission is zero deaths from melanoma this decade.

## Melanoma Facts

Australia has the highest melanoma rates in the world. Melanoma is often referred to as 'Australia's national cancer'.



1300

It is estimated 1300 Australians will die from melanoma this year



6 hours

One Australian dies from melanoma every 6 hours



#3 in Australia

Melanoma is the third most common cancer in Australia



#1 in age 20-39

Melanoma is the most common cancer for Australians aged 20 to 39



#2 in men

Melanoma is the second most common cancer in Australian men, after prostate cancer



#3 in women

Melanoma is the third most common cancer in Australian women, after breast and colorectal cancer



95%

95% of melanomas are caused by overexposure to UV radiation from the sun



90%

If caught early, 90% of melanomas can be cured by surgery

### Survival from advanced melanoma



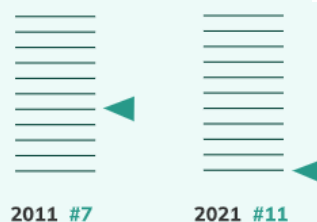
2011 <10%



2021 >50%

In the last decade, the 5-year overall survival rate for advanced melanoma has increased from <10% to >50%.

### Most deadly cancers



2011 #7

2021 #11

In 2011, melanoma was Australia's 7th most deadly cancer. In 2021, melanoma was Australia's 11th most deadly cancer.

## News From The World of Melanoma



*As you might expect from an Australian organisation the MIA has a wonderful plain English website and a vast range of publications which can be read online or downloaded.*

"A melanoma diagnosis can be a confusing and traumatic time for patients. That's why we have information available for patients and their families to support them on their melanoma journey."

### Patient Guides

There are four different guides based on the stage of melanoma:

- Melanoma Prevention and Early Detection
- Early Melanoma (Stage 0-II)
- Stage III Melanoma
- Stage IV Melanoma

The guides will help you to:

- Answer questions you have
- Understand melanoma diagnosis, treatment and follow-up care
- Know where to go for further information and resources



Melanoma Prevention and Early Detection

<https://melanoma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Melanoma-Prevention-and-Early-Detection-2022-Guide.pdf>



Early Melanoma  
(Stage 0 – II)

[https://melanoma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/MIA\\_Early-Stage-Guide\\_2022-Version.pdf](https://melanoma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/MIA_Early-Stage-Guide_2022-Version.pdf)



Stage III

<https://melanoma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Your-Guide-to-Stage-III-Melanoma.pdf>



Stage IV

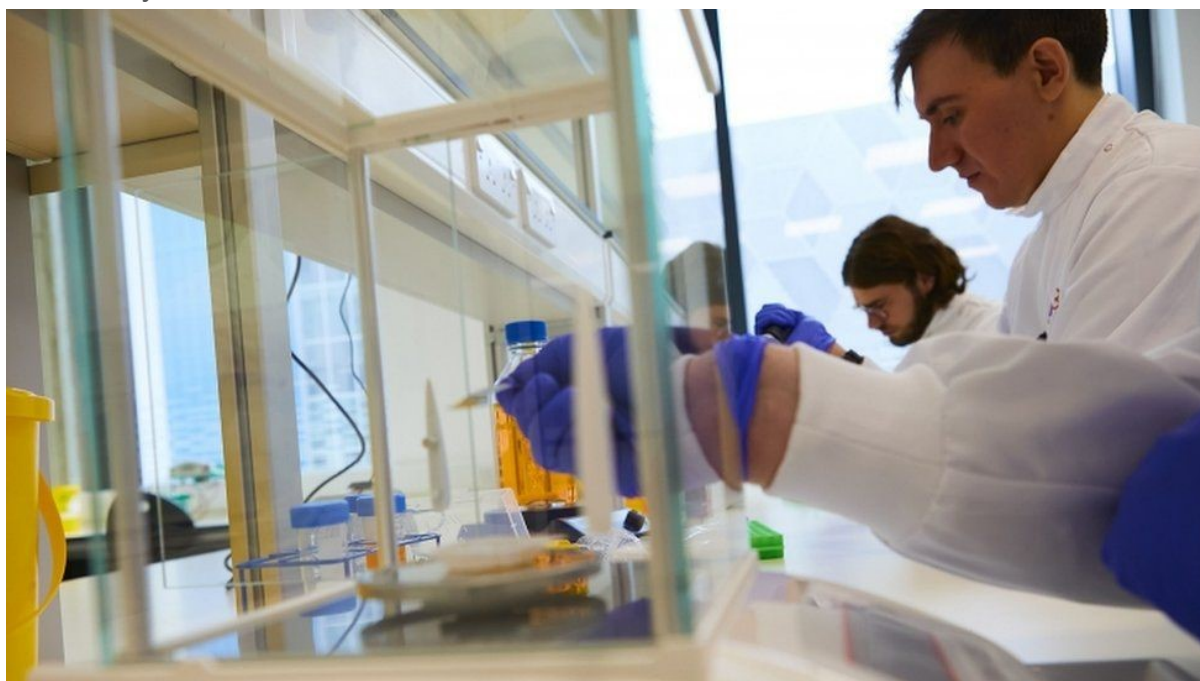
[https://melanoma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/MIA\\_Stage-IV-Melanoma-Guide-2023\\_web.pdf](https://melanoma.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/MIA_Stage-IV-Melanoma-Guide-2023_web.pdf)

## *News From The World of Melanoma*

**B B C**

**NEWS**

14 January 2022



Researchers found early stage melanomas at risk of spreading secrete a growth factor which reduces certain proteins in the skin

### **Scientists have developed a test which reliably predicts the spread or return of the most deadly form of skin cancer.**

The Newcastle University team made the breakthrough in understanding how skin cancer tumours grow.

The test, known as AMBLor, is applied to a standard biopsy of the primary melanoma when it is removed. Professor Penny Lovat, who led the work, said it will provide reassurance to patients who are diagnosed with an early stage melanoma.

"Our test offers a personalised prognosis as it more accurately predicts if your skin cancer is unlikely to spread," she said.

"This test will aid clinicians to identify genuinely low-risk patients diagnosed with an early stage melanoma and to reduce the number of follow-up appointments for those identified as low risk, saving the NHS time and money."

Currently, primary tumours are removed by surgery and pathologists study the biopsy under a microscope to determine the stage the skin cancer is at and the risk of it spreading.

Even if defined as low risk, the patient is followed up in a clinic for as long as five years.

*Cont'd*



## News From The World of Melanoma

**B B C**

**NEWS**

### 'Like mortar crumbling away'

Prof Lovat said melanoma is the fifth most common cancer in the UK - with about 16,000 cases last year - and an increasingly worldwide problem.

"Incidence rates are set to increase by more than 60% by 2040, and 91% of patients are diagnosed with some early-stage melanoma," she told BBC Radio Newcastle.

The research, supported by The British Skin Foundation and carried out in association with the university spin-out firm Amlo Biosciences, has been published in the British Journal of Dermatology.



Prof Lovat's team have applied for the test to be available on the NHS

The foundation's chief operating officer, Phil Brady, said: "The development of the AMBLor test can alleviate stress and anxiety for patients caused by this potentially deadly skin cancer, whilst increasing efficiency and reducing costs to the NHS."

Researchers found that early stage melanomas which are at risk of spreading secrete a growth factor which causes the reduction, or downregulation, of certain proteins in the skin overlying the tumour.

"When these proteins are lost, gaps develop - like the mortar crumbling away in the wall," Prof Lovat explained.

"This allows the tumour to spread and ultimately ulcerate, which we know is a process associated with higher risk tumours.

"Our new understanding of this biological mechanism underpins the test we have available."

The team has made an application for the test to be available on the NHS.

## MelaNoMore's Buddies and Friends



Join the conversation – we are looking for both “friends” and “buddies” to match together

“It is so good just to talk – we discuss all sorts of different subjects and have formed a real friendship”

**MelaNoMore Buddies**  
Let's talk

A 2020 study of 100,000 Brits found that confiding in others appears to reduce the risk of depression by 21%

Whether you have just received your diagnosis, are undertaking treatments, still on the road to recovery, or a family member trying to make sense of it all, you may be feeling anxious, fearful, apprehensive. MelaNoMore is here to help. We cannot give medical advice, but we can give a listening ear and the chance to chat with someone who understands what you're going through.

For further information: visit [www.melanomore.net/buddies/](http://www.melanomore.net/buddies/) or email: [melanomore.buddy@gmail.com](mailto:melanomore.buddy@gmail.com)

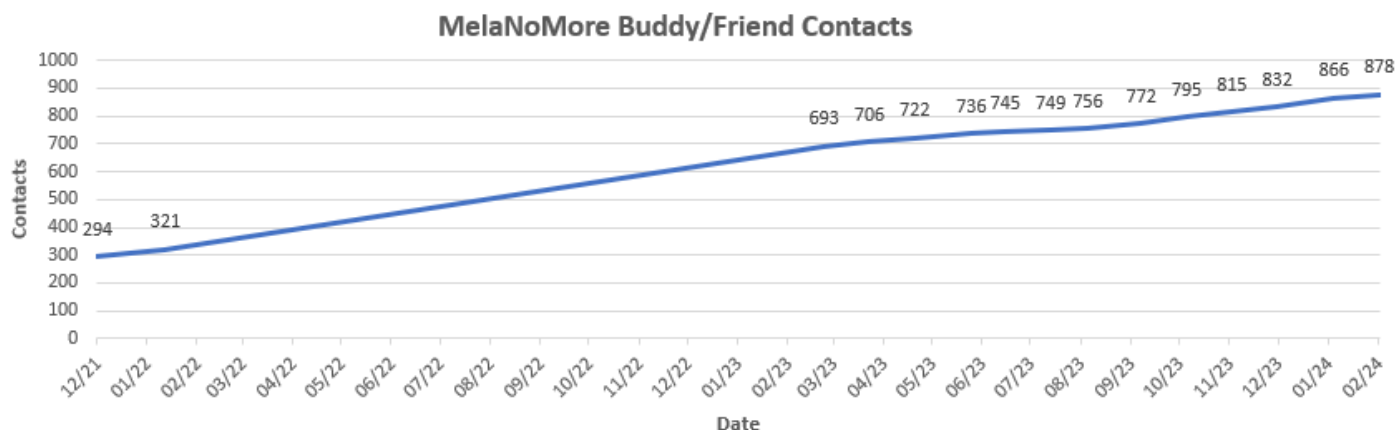
**Chris Caswell, Lead – MelaNoMore Buddies**

The MelaNoMore Buddies system continues to offer support via the Buddy / Friend one to one pairing. A Buddy, who perhaps has had more experience of the melanoma path and process, is paired with a Friend, who is possibly newer and in need of support and a listening ear.

This pairing offers support to share information, to discuss worries and concerns on a one to one basis, without the constraints of appointment time slots. This support pairing is away from the standard clinical appointments, on a more frequent basis, probably weekly or more.

Contacts are mostly by longer phone calls and interspersed with shorter ad hoc text or WhatsApp messages.

In over three years Buddies have been in contact with 29 Friends to give support, shared 839 phone calls, texts, WhatsApps or emails. There have also been a total of 39 face to face meetings, including MelaNoMore group gatherings at the Loseley Park in April '22, the Summer BBQ in August '22, the Christmas celebration at the Hogs Back Hotel in December '22, the Summer BBQ in August '23 and the Christmas gathering in December '23. This gives a total of 878 support contacts since inception in October '20.



If you wish to join this support group, as either a Buddy or a Friend, please send an email to [group@melanomore.net](mailto:group@melanomore.net)

This page is for your contributions to the Newsletter. There are no limits on content.

## Sarah Ferguson's 'shock' at skin cancer diagnosis

BBC

NEWS

22 January



**Not even the Royal's are immune to melanoma.**

**The Duchess of York has spoken of her "shock" at being diagnosed with malignant melanoma, a form of skin cancer, but is in "good spirits".**

In an Instagram post, she said she was "grateful for the many messages of love and support".

The melanoma was discovered following the removal of a cancerous mole during treatment for breast cancer.

The duchess, Sarah Ferguson, had several moles removed and analysed while having reconstructive surgery.

The duchess is the third royal to announce a medical procedure this week.

"I have been taking some time to myself as I have been diagnosed with malignant melanoma, a form of skin cancer," she said on Instagram on Monday.

It was her second cancer diagnosis within a year after being diagnosed with breast cancer in the summer and having undergone a mastectomy and reconstructive surgery.

"Naturally another cancer diagnosis has been a shock, but I'm in good spirits and grateful for the many messages of love and support."

On Sunday her spokesman had said: "Her dermatologist asked that several moles were removed and analysed at the same time as the duchess was undergoing reconstructive surgery following her mastectomy, and one of these has been identified as cancerous.

She was undergoing further investigations to ensure this had been caught in the early stages, he added.

"She believes her experience underlines the importance of **checking the size, shape, colour and texture** and emergence of new moles that can be a sign of melanoma."

According to sources close to the duchess, she is back in the UK after initially recuperating in Austria.

A second cancer diagnosis within six months is clearly a great challenge to deal with, say sources, but she is a resilient person and is getting the care and support of her family.

The duchess has shown a remarkable ability to bounce back from adversity.

We hope you enjoy this Newsletter. Please let us know or if you have, any suggestions for improvement or any articles you wish to publish. You can contact us on:

[group@melanomore.net](mailto:group@melanomore.net)



## MelaNoMore Vacancies

We continue to have vacancies on the Committee and are also in need of volunteers to assist the Committee with tasks or roles - such as:

- \*Website designer
- \*Deputy Newsletter Editor
- \*Membership Secretary
- \*Linked Site leads
- \*Committee members

If you are interested in helping out with any of these roles or wish to join the Committee, then drop a line to

**[group@melanomore.net](mailto:group@melanomore.net)**

Include your phone number and we will ring you back to discuss with you.

