DR. JERRY BREWER: Hi, I am Dr. Jerry Brewer. I'm one of the dermatologic surgeons at Mayo Clinic. Today I'm going to be talking about an article entitled Increased Incidence of Melanoma Among Middle Aged Adults, an epidemiologic study in Olmsted County, Minnesota. To be published in the Mayo Clinic proceedings January 2004.

So in this study, we looked at 383 people that had been diagnosed with melanoma between 1970 and 2009. And looking at these individuals over those four decades, we found that women in that category had an increased incidence of not on a 24 and 1/2 fold. I'm sorry, 24-fold increase compared to 1970. And men over that time period had a 4 and 1/2 fold increase, or rise in melanoma. We found that even though there was a drastic rise in melanoma, especially among middle aged women, that there was an increased ability to survive the melanoma. And the survival was correlated with about a 6% increased chance of surviving melanoma, per one calendar year.

So that tends to show us what we think we have seen in the past, that even though we're seeing melanoma on the rise, that we tend to be diagnosing it at an earlier stage and being able to survive it more often. There was no difference according to men versus women, or no difference in sex in survival of melanoma or all cause survival.

When we look at the drastic increased incidence, especially in women, 24-fold increase which correlates with over 2300% increase in melanoma since 1970, we see that most of the people getting melanoma were right around the age of 40 to 50. And it seemed that there may have been a cutoff around that period of time, although not statistically significant. Which lends to questions of whether hormonal influences are a factor in the development of melanoma, especially in middle aged women.

With this information, we would however, recommend that people who fall within this category, who have had some exposure in the past to be very in tune with their skin. And we would recommend self skin examinations on a regular basis at home, seeing a dermatologist annually, and avoiding tanning beds as a way to help protect and catch melanoma at an early stage.

SPEAKER 1: We hope you found this presentation from the content of Mayo Clinic proceedings valuable. Our journals mission is, to promote the best interests of patients by advancing the knowledge and professionalism of the physician community. If you're interested in more information about us, our homepage is www.mayoclinicproceedings.org. There you will find access information for our social media content, such as additional videos on our YouTube channel, or journal updates on Facebook.

You can also follow us on Twitter. More information about health care at Mayo Clinic is available at www.mayoclinic.com. This video content is copyrighted by Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research.