Protein known to heal skin after UV light damage linked to skin cancer cell proliferation.

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Ultraviolet (UV) light is a known cancer-causing agent. By damaging cellular DNA, UV light increases the risk of cells developing mutations leading to cancer. New research out of the Medical College of Georgia, however, indicates that UV light may not only create cancer cells; it may also help them grow. Skin cells use a particular protein (protein kinase D) to help them regenerate after being damaged. This prevents the skin from dying and leaving the body vulnerable. This protein, however, may also aid in cancer cell proliferation. Normally, the body eliminates cells with DNA damage, but the pro-survival function of protein kinase D may allow cancer cells to bypass the body’s natural process of eliminating damaged cells.

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