

Prince visits Africa in wake of Di's death

DUKUDUKU, South Africa (AP) — Britain's 13-year-old prince watched shyly Monday as adolescent girls performed a Zulu dance during a visit with his father to a rural high school in South Africa.

Prince Harry's trip to Africa marked his first public activity since the funeral of his mother, Princess Diana, who died in a car crash in Paris on Aug. 31.

The journey also fulfilled one of Diana's wishes, for her sons to see Africa. Diana's brother, Earl Spencer, lives in Cape Town, but officials did not say if Harry visited his uncle.

At Ubuhlebemvelo High

School in KwaZulu-Natal province, Charles and Harry watched the bare-breasted girls, wearing black-and-white string skirts, perform the traditional dance.

Harry talked quietly to his father during the performance. When a teacher spoke to Harry, he only smiled. He walked shyly with his left thumb in his pocket, scratching the soil with his foot.

Charles arrived in southern Africa on Wednesday to begin a three-nation tour. While Charles visited Swaziland and Lesotho, Harry went on safari in Botswana with a school friend and his former nanny, Tiggy Legge-Bourke.

Prince William, Harry's older brother, remained behind in Britain because of school.

Most of Harry's six-day visit was without media coverage, a controversial issue after his mother died in a high-speed car chase trying to avoid photographers.

On Saturday, the two princes reunited for a public meeting with Britain's top female music group, the Spice Girls, at a concert in Johannesburg.

Harry left South Africa later Monday to return to school in England, while Charles attended a banquet in Durban.

Some sunbathing could stop cancer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Basking briefly in the sun every day may be an important way to prevent breast cancer, researchers said Monday. But they also warned, "Don't overdo it."

New studies indicate that vitamin D, a nutrient made by the skin during exposure to sunlight, can lower the risk of breast cancer by 30 percent to 40 percent and perhaps even more.

"We know now that a little bit of sun is beneficial, but it is not good to stay out there four or five hours," said epidemiologist Esther John of the North California Cancer Center. "We don't want to recommend that people go out and bake in the sun."

She said it is well known that excessive exposure to sunlight can cause skin cancer and premature aging of the skin.

John, in a study presented Monday at a scientific meeting of breast cancer experts, said that a study comparing the health habits of 133 breast cancer patients with women who did not have the disease found that exposure to sunlight significantly reduced the risk of breast cancer.

Sunlight lowers the risk, said John, because the skin uses ultraviolet rays from the sun to make vitamin D. This nutrient has been closely linked to protection against breast cancer in other studies, she said.

The study was part of a national research project that has been following the health of about 8,000 women since 1970. The research monitors the development of cancer and other health events, and compares the effects of such things as diet and

exercise of women who get the disease and those who don't.

John said that the study confirmed earlier findings that women who live in the southern tier of states below Kansas tend to get significantly fewer cases of breast cancer than those who live in the North.

The difference, she said, is sunlight and how the skin makes vitamin D.

Southern states have more year-round sunlight than Northern states do. As a result, people in the South get more natural ultraviolet ray exposure.

For instance, John said that winter sunlight is so weak in the North that people living at or above 40 degree North latitude do not get enough sun from November to February to make the required levels of vitamin D. Boston is at latitude 42 degrees.

John said the study did not determine just how much sun exposure is needed to protect against breast cancer, but she said it probably is less than what would cause skin damage.

Sunscreen lotions that block ultraviolet rays would also block the formation of vitamin D, she said.

Vitamin D can also come from the diet, said John. The vitamin is available naturally in fish oil, fatty fish, egg yolk and liver, all foods that few Americans eat, she said. Milk and some cereals and breads are fortified with vitamin D.

"If they depend on food only for vitamin D, women would have to eat foods with at least 200 international units a day to get a reduction in breast cancer risk," she said.

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