



The Importance of Sunscreen

As the season shifts to summer, we are treated to long, warm, sunny days with plenty of enjoyable outdoor activities. This means a lot more skin exposure to the bright summer sun. Although a little bit of sunshine is necessary for Vitamin D recommendations, too much sun can result in skin damage and even skin cancer. Make sure that this summer you protect yourself and your skin.

What causes skin damage?

When the sun shines down on us, we are exposed to UV radiation from the sun rays. There are two main types of sun rays that can cause damage to your skin:

UVA

- Also known as ultraviolet A rays, these are the sun's long-wave rays that make up 95% of the sun radiation that reaches Earth.
- UVAs are less intense than UVBs, but they also penetrate the skin more deeply than UVBs.

- These rays are capable of penetrating clouds and glass.
- Tanning is a result of UVA rays damaging the skin's DNA.

UVB

- Ultraviolet B rays are the sun's short-wave rays.
- Intensity varies by time of day and season, with 10am-4pm from April through October commonly having the highest amount of UVBs.
- UVB rays cause superficial damage to the skin, including skin reddening and burning.

Make sure to check your entire body once a month for any changes to your skin. If anything is growing, changing, or bleeding, make an appointment to see a doctor right away.

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How do I protect my skin from UVs?

- If possible, seek the shade from 10am to 4pm during summer months, when UV rays are at peak intensity.
- Wear protective clothing, including long sleeved shirts, pants, wide-brimmed hats, and UV blocking sunglasses.
- Avoid tanning booths and tanning outdoors. Tanning is the first sign of skin damage. **There is no such thing as a safe tan!**
- Do not burn!
- Be aware that reflective surfaces can intensify UV rays. That includes water, snow, and sand.
- Use appropriate sunscreens and sunscreen procedures.

What type of sunscreen should I choose?

- Broad spectrum sunscreen ensures that you are protected from both UVA and UVB rays.
- Pick an SPF of at least 15, with higher SPF for fairer skin. Water resistant sunscreen can help ensure sunscreen initially stays on, despite sweat and water.
- Although still being researched, some environmental groups recommend picking a sunscreen with a mineral as the active ingredient to avoid exposure to chemicals. Examples of sunscreen minerals include zinc or titanium.

With these tips, you should be able to enjoy a healthy, sunburn free summer!

How do I properly use sunscreen?

- Choose broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen, with at least SPF 15.
- Make sure to apply sunscreen 30 minutes before sun exposure.
- Use around 1 ounce of sunscreen to cover your body each time. That is enough sunscreen to fill a shot glass!
- Reapply sunscreen at least every two hours and immediately after swimming or excessive sweating.



Call Your Health Coach for More Information 1-800-433-2320

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