

Sun Safety Tips

The most common cause of skin cancer is sun damage. Ultraviolet rays from the sun cause tanning and burning. Tanned skin is damaged skin, which can lead to dryness, wrinkles, brown spots and skin cancer. **This damage cannot be repaired.**

How to Protect Your Skin from Sun Damage

- Stay out of the sun between 10 AM and 4 PM when the sun's rays are the strongest. Sand, water and the concrete around pools reflect most of the sun's harmful rays into shaded places.
- Apply a sunscreen before going outdoors even in the winter. The sunlight coming through car windows can damage your skin.
- Wear tightly woven clothing such as long-sleeved shirts and pants. If you can see light when holding fabric up to the light, the sun can get in. A wet t-shirt lets in almost as much sunlight as bare skin.
- Wear a tightly woven hat with a brim and sunglasses.
- **Do not use tanning beds.** The ultraviolet light causes premature aging and increases the risk of skin cancer.
- Certain medicines increase sensitivity to the sun. Avoid being in the sun when taking these medicines.

How to Choose a Sunscreen

- Choose a sunscreen with a SPF factor of 15 or higher that also blocks the full spectrum of UVA light. SPF ratings tell you how well the sunscreen shields against UVA rays that burn and damage the skin.
- Avoid products that combine UV and insect protection in one bottle. The sunscreen may be less effective.
- Oil-free products are best for you if you get acne breakouts.
- If a sunscreen causes stinging, itching or a rash, try a fragrance-free formula.
- Cosmetics, moisturizer or make-up



foundations with UV protection need a full teaspoon of the product on your face to provide good protection.

- Keep babies younger than 6 months out of the sun. Use a sunscreen made for babies but limit the time in the sun.

How to Use Sunscreen

- Apply sunscreen at least 20 minutes before going outside.
- Use enough sunscreen to cover your body well. Do not forget to apply sunscreen to the nose, neck, tops of feet, rims of ears and the lips.
- Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours when outdoors, even if the label says the sunscreen is water-resistant, sweat-proof or all day protection. Put on more sunscreen when it is windy, after being in the water or after working up a sweat.
- Do not use expired sunscreen.

Check Your Skin

- Check your skin monthly for skin changes. Tell your doctor about new or unusual bumps, spots, blisters or changes in a mole.
- Have your skin checked by a doctor every 3 years before age 40 and yearly after that. People at high risk for skin cancer may need to see their doctor more often.