

Why is it Important to be Safe in the Sun?

It is so wonderful to be outside on a beautiful day with the sun shining all around you. Have you ever wondered why some people get sunburned on such a beautiful day? The sun produces powerful rays called ultraviolet (UV) rays that penetrate your skin and cause changes to occur. One of those changes causes the skin to turn red and burn. While some exposure to sunlight can be enjoyable and fun, too much can be dangerous. Over-exposure to the UV radiation in the sunlight can result in a painful sunburn.

Choose Your Cover

What works best to effectively block the UV rays? There are action steps that you can follow in all climates and in all locations around the world to stay safe in the sun:

1. Seek Shade

Whenever possible, **stay in the shade and stay under cover**. The best way to protect yourself is to practice the “shadow rule.” When outdoors in the sun, look for your shadow. If you do not see it, get out on the sun. Remember, **No Shadow, Seek Shade!**

2. Always Use Sunscreen

- Apply a broad spectrum waterproof **sunscreen** with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 or higher on your exposed skin. Reapply sunscreen every two hours especially when playing or working out doors. Waterproof sunscreen can come off when you sweat, swim or towel off.
- Use **lipbalm** with a SPF of 15 or higher to protect your lips.

3. Wear Sunglasses

Sunglasses that are UVA and UVB coated are the best to protect your eyes and reduce sun exposure that might cause eye damage.

4. Wear a Hat

A **wide-brimmed hat** is best because it covers your eyes, ears, face and the back of your neck. If you do not have a wide-brimmed hat, another hat, such as a baseball hat, is fine as long as you rub sunscreen on your ears, face and do not use sunscreen near your eyes.

5. Cover up

Wear tightly woven long-sleeved shirts and full-length clothing if possible. If you place your hand under your shirt and see your hand through your shirt then you know that the UV rays can pass through as well. Try to wear dark colors when out in the sun. It's easy to stay safe in the sun.

- Wear sun-safe clothing.
- Use sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher).
- Stay in the shade.

The Sun's Aging Effects

Your skin has a “memory,” keeping track of all the sun damage that has accumulated over the years. Even normal everyday sun exposure can cause lines and wrinkles, making us look older than we are.