

Sun Safety Tips

80% of one's total lifetime sun exposure occurs in the first 18 years of life. Sun protection in childhood is very important to prevention of skin cancer later in life.

The sun's rays are the strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. (9a.m. – 3 p.m. during daylight savings). Try to limit outdoor activities during these hours. Do not be fooled by cloudy days. Sand, water, and concrete can reflect the sun's rays.

Choose a waterproof sunscreen made for children. Make sure to check the expiration date. Choose a "broad spectrum" sunscreen to protect UVA and UVB rays. Choose at least an SPF 15 sunscreen. Look for the new UVA "star" rating system. Four stars is the highest UVA protection available over the counter.

Apply sunscreen generously 30 minutes prior to going outdoors. Rub sunscreen in well, covering all exposed areas. Apply under bathing suit straps. Be careful applying sunscreen around the eyes and avoid the eyelids. Zinc oxide is a very effective sun block (and comes in fun colors) that can be used for extra protection on needed areas – nose, cheeks, ears, shoulders. Re-apply sunscreen every 90 minutes, after sweating, and after swimming.

Babies under 6 months of age should avoid sun exposure. If you cannot avoid sun exposure then apply sunscreen.

When having fun in the sun, be sure your child drinks plenty of water. Protect his/her eyes with eyewear that offers 99% UV protection. Hats with a brim will also offer sun protection. Many clothing items now offer SPF protection.

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