

American Cancer Society Circle Of LifeSM : *Cancer Education and Wellness*

Sun Safety Fact Sheet



Photo courtesy of J. Morgan Edwards Photography

Sun Exposure and Cancer

The sun produces ultraviolet (UV) rays that can damage skin and eyes with too much exposure. People with light skin are more likely to get sun damage, but it can happen to anyone. People with darker skin, including American Indians and Alaska Natives, can get sun damage and skin cancer. The good news is that you can do a lot to help protect yourself and your family from skin cancer.

Sun Safety

Some people think about protecting their skin and eyes only when they spend a day at the lake, beach, or pool. Sun exposure adds up day after day, and it happens every time you are in the sun.

There are some steps you can take to limit your amount of exposure to UV rays:

- Cover up with clothes.
- Wear a hat with a wide brim all around.
- Wear sunglasses that block UV rays. Labels that say “UV absorption up to 400 nm” or “Meets ANSI UV Requirements” mean the glasses block at least 99% of UV rays. Those labeled “cosmetic” block about 70% of UV rays. If there is no label, don’t assume the sunglasses provide any UV protection.
- Choose broad-spectrum sunscreen rated SPF 30 or higher. Apply it generously to all exposed areas, and re-apply every 2 hours you’re in the sun.
- Limit midday sun exposure.
- Avoid tanning beds and sunlamps
- Protect children from the sun by using the measures described above.
- Babies younger than 6 months of age should be kept out of direct sunlight and protected from the sun using hats and protective clothing.

If you would like more information about sun safety, please visit cancer.org or call 1-800-227-2345.

