

Like

G+

Tweet inShare

Share this Page: +

powered by iContact



Monthly Safety Blast

Produced by the Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education

May 2016

Sun Safety

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the US. The sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays can damage your skin in as little as 15 minutes. Follow these recommendations to help protect yourself and your family.

Shade

You can reduce your risk of skin damage and skin cancer by seeking shade under an umbrella, tree, or other shelter before you need relief from the sun. Your best bet to protect your skin is to use sunscreen or wear protective clothing when you're outside—even when you're in the shade.

Clothing

When possible, long-sleeved shirts and long pants and skirts can provide protection from UV rays. Clothes made from tightly woven fabric offer the best protection. A wet T-shirt offers much less UV protection than a dry one, and darker colors may offer more protection than lighter colors. Some clothing certified under international standards comes with information on its ultraviolet protection factor.

If wearing this type of clothing isn't practical, at least try to wear a T-shirt or a beach cover-up. Keep in mind that a typical T-shirt has an SPF rating lower than 15, so use other types of protection as well.

Hat

For the most protection, wear a hat with a brim all the way around that shades your face, ears, and the back of your neck. A tightly woven fabric, such as canvas, works best to protect your skin from UV rays. Avoid straw hats with holes that let sunlight through. A darker hat may offer more UV protection.



If you wear a baseball cap, you should also protect your ears and the back of your neck by wearing clothing that covers those areas, using sunscreen with at least SPF 15, or by staying in the shade.

Sunglasses

Sunglasses protect your eyes from UV rays and reduce the risk of cataracts. They also protect the tender skin around your eyes from sun exposure.

Sunglasses that block both UVA and UVB rays offer the best protection. Most sunglasses sold in the United States, regardless of cost, meet this standard. Wrap-around sunglasses work best because they block UV rays from sneaking in from the side.

Sunscreen

Put on broad spectrum sunscreen with at least SPF 15 before you go outside, even on slightly cloudy or cool days. Don't forget to put a thick layer on all parts of exposed skin. Get help for hard-to-reach places like your back. And remember, sunscreen works best when combined with other options to prevent UV damage.

SPF. Sunscreens are assigned a sun protection factor (SPF) number that rates their effectiveness in blocking UV rays. Higher numbers indicate more protection. You should use a broad spectrum sunscreen with at least SPF 15.

Reapplication. Sunscreen wears off. Put it on again if you stay out in the sun for more than two hours and after swimming, sweating, or toweling off.

Expiration date. Check the sunscreen's expiration date. Sunscreen without an expiration date has a shelf life of no more than three years, but its shelf life is shorter if it has been exposed to high temperatures.

Cosmetics. Some makeup and lip balms contain some of the same chemicals used in sunscreens. If they do not have at least SPF 15, don't use them by themselves.



Take the [Sun Safety quiz](#) to test your knowledge!

Resources:

- http://www.sunsafetyalliance.org/safety_tips.html

- <http://www.cancer.org/healthy/besafeinthesun/index?sitearea=MH>
- <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/index.htm>

Disclaimer: The facts and information listed above are merely suggestions for your safety, but are in no way a comprehensive and exhausted list of all actions needed to insure your safety.

*Monthly Blast written by SW Ag Center Outreach Education Coordinator,
Nykole Kafka Vance, MS, CEP*

Sharing is caring!



Do you like what you're reading?

*Check out past Monthly Blasts on
<http://www.swagcenter.org/resourcesmonthlyblasts.asp>*

Produced by the Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention and Education. For more information, contact us at 903-877-5998 or by email to agcenter@uthct.edu.
Copyright 2016