

Sunscreen Best Practices for Healthy, Radiant Skin

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This time of the year is the perfect opportunity to go for a hike, explore a new part of town, play a game or head to a local park. As you head outside, be sure you and your family are enjoying the sunshine safely — both by social distancing and protecting your skin.

Wear Sunscreen Every Day

Summer isn't the only time you should wear sunscreen. Dermatologists recommend wearing sunscreen every day, even in the winter. Sunscreen protects your skin from the sun's harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays. There are two types of UV rays: UVA rays penetrate into the deep layers of skin to cause skin damage, and UVB rays damage the skin's surface and cause sunburn.

The sun's damage goes deeper than signs of aging like wrinkles and dark spots. UV causes damage to the DNA in skin cells, which may make them grow and divide abnormally into cancerous cells. Protect your skin in sunscreen every day — whether it's a daily lotion and moisturizer in the winter, or a thick sunscreen in warmer months.

Wear Enough and Apply It Everywhere

Experts recommend using at least one ounce of sunscreen to cover the entire body, which is enough to fill a shot glass. Be sure to get **easy-to-miss areas** including your scalp, around your eyes and feet.

Reapply

Once isn't enough when it comes to sunscreen application. Apply one ounce of sunscreen at least every two hours or after swimming, towel drying or sweating. Check the bottle's label for additional directions for your sunscreen.

Pick the Right Sunscreen for You

The best sunscreen is one that you'll apply regularly. Find a sunscreen that feels good on your skin, so you feel comfortable wearing it every day. Sunscreen is generally divided into two types: Physical and chemical.

Physical sunscreen creates a barrier between your skin and the sun by reflecting UV rays or absorbing it with active ingredients like zinc oxide or titanium dioxide. These types of sunscreens are generally hypoallergenic and may be better for sensitive skin.

Chemical sunscreens absorb UV rays and break them down with a chemical reaction to stop them from damaging your skin. Whichever you prefer, dermatologists recommend you choose a sunscreen that's:

- SPF 30 or Higher
- UVA and UVB Protected
- Water Resistant

Wear Sun-Protective Clothing

Sunscreen isn't the only way to prevent skin damage. Sun protective clothing is designed to protect your skin from UV rays. Clothing is rated by its ultraviolet protection factor (UPF), which outlines how effectively fabric stops UV rays from reaching your skin. The higher the UPF, the more protection the clothing offers. Hats, sunglasses and cover-ups are also an effective way to protect your skin from the sun.

Stay in the Shade

Take a break from the sun by cooling down in the shade. Bring an umbrella to the beach, set up camp at the pool in a shady area or lounge under a tree when you're getting hot or too much sun. Keep in mind the sun's rays are strongest between 10 am and 2 pm. Try to avoid the sun during these times. If you're outside, be sure to apply sunscreen and cover up with clothing.

Protect Your Skin All Year Round

Whether you're enjoying the outdoors in the summer, fall, winter or spring, protect your skin with sunscreen. Examine your skin at least once a year, looking for suspicious growths or any changes to moles.

If you notice something unusual, [reach out](#) to one of our whole-health experts who can help.

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