



SUN PROTECTION CHEAT SHEET

Sun exposure is a normal consequence of healthy outdoor activity. Here are some ways to enjoy the outdoors while still protecting your skin from ultraviolet light damage, sunburn, wrinkling and skin cancer.

Avoid the mid-day sun. Damaging ultraviolet (UV) rays are strongest at the noon hour. Schedule outdoor activities before 10AM or after 4PM and stay in the shade if possible.

Don't rely on the weather reports. Damaging UV rays can be strong even on cloudy days. Some types of UV rays, particularly those that are attributed to aging, can penetrate car window glass, so commuters can accumulate significant sun damage without being aware of it. Clear UV blocking films can be applied to your car windows. One example can be found at www.LLumar.com.

Wear broad spectrum sunscreens of SPF 30 or higher every day. Many people avoid applying products that they dislike the feel of, so try out various lotions, gels, sprays, sticks or even cloth wipes to find a product that you like and will apply often. If you have sensitive skin, try zinc oxide or titanium dioxide ingredients.

Apply sunscreen thickly. When most of us apply sunscreens, we apply only one third to one half of what is required to reach the labeled SFP value. One ounce (about a shot glass full) is required to cover your whole body.

Don't forget the tricky spots. Many people forget to apply sunscreen to the tops of their ears and the back of the neck where many skin cancers arise.

Reapply sunscreens often. Many sunscreens lose their efficacy after 2-3 hours. Newer, photo-stabilized sunscreens offer 4-5 hours of protection. All sunscreens, even the longer-acting ones, should be reapplied after swimming or heavy outdoor activity and sweating.

Wear UV-blocking sunglasses to protect the sensitive skin around your eyes and prevent UV-induced cataracts.

Wear protective clothing and broad-brimmed hats. Lightweight long-sleeved shirts and pants can often be equally as comfortable as skimpier outfits. Darker colors and tightly-woven fabrics are the most effective in blocking UV rays. Rit Sun Guard is a useful and inexpensive laundry rinse that adds UV blocking ability to your clothes. Some clothing brands come with UPF rating ([Coolibar/Solumbra](#)) that stands for "Ultraviolet Protection Factor." This measures the ability of the fabric to block UV radiation. A fabric with UPF 15 only allows 1/15th (6.66%) of the UV radiation to penetrate your skin as compared to uncovered skin. Avoid remaining in wet clothes because wet fabric may allow more UV rays to penetrate the skin.

Wear lip balm with an SPF 30 or higher. For cosmetics, tinted lip balms or lipsticks contain SFP 30 and offer adequate protection.

Introduce safe sun habits to your children at a young age and model these behaviors for them. Enlist their help in applying sunscreen, encourage sunglasses and engage in sun protective activities.

Ask your primary care doctor about dietary sources of Vitamin D and Vitamin D supplementation. Don't rely on sun exposure to protect your bones.

Watch your medicines. Some drugs can increase your sensitivity to the sun. Ask your doctor if any of your medications cause sun sensitivity and increase your sun protection accordingly.