

Sun Safety

It is known as the best season of the year to many: SUMMER. However, this fun-filled season can bring damage to your skin if you do not act with caution while outdoors. Block the sun, not the fun!!

SAFETY TIPS:

- If you cannot cover up, use a sunscreen, which has Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 15. Make sure it has both Ultraviolet-A (UVA) and Ultraviolet-B (UVB) protection. Reapply it every 2-3 hours, as well as after swimming, paying particular attention to the most exposed parts of your body – the face, neck, ears, shoulders, back, knees, and tops of feet.
- Read and follow the manufacturer's recommendations on the bottle or tube of sunscreen.
- If applying more than one substance on your skin, always put the sunscreen on first and wait 30 minutes before applying the second substance.
- Always test for an allergic reaction when first using a sunscreen.
- Remember that no sunscreen offers 100% protection. Apply sunscreen and then cover up with a hat, long sleeve shirt and pants.
- Limit the time you spend in the sun. Set a timer or alarm if you think you may fall asleep.
- Do not overdo it when the weather starts to turn warm. Begin with 15 minutes a day, and then slowly increase the time you spend in the sun.
- Wear dark sunglasses to protect your eyes.
- Select shaded areas for outdoor activities.
- Avoid using sun lamps.
- Be particularly careful if you are taking prescription medication. Certain medications can make your skin more sensitive to UV rays. Consult your doctor if you have any questions about your medication.
- Apply a lip balm with sunscreen. Reapply frequently.
- Be cautious of metal and plastic playground equipment that is exposed to direct sun. Contact burns can easily occur.

FACTS AND FIGURES:

- Deaths have resulted from acute sun exposure, and significant temporary disability is experienced by millions of people who are sunburned each year.
- Increased skin cancer risks and premature aging have also been associated with sun exposure.
- Ultraviolet rays can cause serious damage to human skin, especially between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Remember, you can still get a bad sunburn on a cloudy day because up to 80% of the ultraviolet rays can pass through light clouds, haze and fog.
- Sunburn results when the amount of exposure to the sun or other ultraviolet light source exceeds the ability of the body's protective pigment to protect the skin.
- Sunburn in a very light-skinned person may occur in less than 15 minutes of noontime sun exposure, while a dark-skinned person may tolerate the same exposure for hours.
- Unlike a thermal burn, sunburn is not immediately apparent. By the time the skin starts to become painful and red, the damage has been done.
- The pain is worst between 6 to 48 hours after sun exposure. In severe sunburns, blistering of the skin may occur.
- Edema (swelling) is common, especially in the legs. Toxins are released with sunburn, and fever is not uncommon. Skin peeling usually begins between three and eight days after exposure.