

Sun Safety



A Guide to Staying Safe in the Sun

The Importance of Sun Safety

Sun exposure is the most common cause of skin cancer. Because skin cancer is preventable, it is important that people (especially those working outdoors) protect themselves from the sun. Also, being out in the sun can lead to heat stress which can be very serious and/or dangerous.

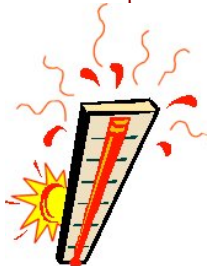


Ultraviolet Radiation

Ultraviolet (UV) radiation is sent out by the sun. It has been shown to cause skin cancer and has been linked to other health problems, including sunburns, cataracts, premature aging (of the skin) and weakening of the immune system. There are 2 types of UV rays. These are UVA and UVB. UVB rays are the rays that cause sunburn and are known to cause cancer. UVA rays cause damage that you can't see. They can cause premature aging, might lower the immune system and could cause cancer.

The Risks of Heat Stress

Another reason to be sun safe is because when you are working outside there is the risk of suffering from heat stress. Heat stress illness includes sunburn, heat rash, heat cramps, heat syncope, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Heat stroke can be fatal and it is therefore very important to protect yourself from it. Heat stroke occurs when the body has used up all of its water and salt and stops sweating. The result is that the body is unable to regulate its normal temperature.



It is important to know the signs and symptoms of the various heat stress hazards in order to avoid an emergency situation. Appropriate safety measures should be used to prevent heat related illnesses.



How to be Sun Safe

There are a number of things that you can do to prevent yourself from the negative effects of the sun. These include:

- Wearing sunscreen of at least sun protection factor (SPF) 15, make sure it reads “broad spectrum”, in order to protect against UVA and UVB rays
- Avoid strenuous work during the hottest times of the day (between 10am and 4pm)
 - Take frequent breaks in a cool environment
 - Drink fluid regularly
- Wear a hat (preferably a wide-brimmed hat to protect your head, ears and neck)



- Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes
 - When outdoors try to remain in the shade
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothes made of breathable fabrics
 - Watch out for signs of heat stress in yourself and others

Appearance Effects Caused by Sun Exposure

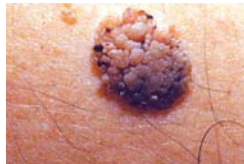
The sun has a number of negative effects on our skin. To begin UV radiation has been shown to cause early aging by causing wrinkles. In identical twins it was discovered that the one who spent more time in the sun tanning aged more quickly than the one who did not. The twin on the left did not spend as much time in the sun as the twin on the right.



Other appearance effects that tanning has on our skin include seborrheic keratoses (tan, brown or black growths with a wart-like appearance), actinic keratoses (rough, scaly areas varying in color from whitish to dark brown patches) and skin cancer (appears as a small growth or a sore that bleeds, crusts over, heals and then reopens) including melanoma.



Melanoma



Seborrheic Keratoses



For more information visit the following websites:

<http://www.safecanada.ca/>

http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/iyh-vsv/environ/ultraviolet_e.html

www.ahu.on.ca

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/sun-damage/HQ01462>

www.sdhu.ca

Produced by Rayna Warth



Blind River District Health Centre
Pavillon Santé du District de Blind River