

# Summertime Sun Safety

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LIVE WELL UTAH

*Don't let the risk of sun exposure keep you indoors this summer. Find out how to adequately protect your skin so you can enjoy all summer has to offer – including the sunshine!*

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It's warming up outside and everyone is anxious to be out enjoying the sunshine. The trails, paths, parks and mountains are very inviting and it is time to be outside! But if you are planning to be out in the sunshine, you need to take precautions.

We all need some sun exposure; it's our primary source of vitamin D, which helps us absorb calcium for stronger, healthier bones; but it doesn't take much time in the sun for most people to get the vitamin D they need. Unprotected exposure to the ultraviolet rays from the sun can cause skin damage, eye damage, immune system suppression and skin cancer. Even people in their 20s can develop skin cancer.

Most children get between 50 and 80 percent of their lifetime sun exposure before age 18, so it's important that parents teach their children how to safely enjoy fun in the sun. With the right precautions, you can greatly reduce your child's chance of developing skin cancer.

- Use sunscreen whenever you will be in the sun.
- Apply a generous amount of sunscreen about 30 minutes before going outside so that a good layer of protection can form. Don't forget about lips, hands, ears, feet, shoulders and behind the neck.
- Reapply sunscreen often, approximately every 2 to 3 hours, as recommended by the American Academy of Dermatology. Reapply after sweating or swimming.
- Apply a waterproof sunscreen if you will be around water or will go swimming. Water reflects and intensifies the sun's rays, so we need protection that lasts. Waterproof sunscreens may last up to 80 minutes in the water, and

some are also sweat-and rub-proof. But, regardless of the waterproof label, be sure to reapply sunscreen when coming out of the water.

- Keep in mind that everyone needs extra sun protection. The American Academy of Dermatology recommends that all people – regardless of their skin tone – wear sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher. A sunscreen with SPF 15 is usually good for 2 hours; SPF 30 is good for 4 hours. The SPF is an indicator of the length of time it will provide protection in the sun.

Next, encourage children and adults to stay in the shade during the hottest part of the day, wear protective clothing, hats, sunglasses and even carry a sunbrella when walking during the sunlight hours. Don't forget that you can still get a sunburn through light and sheerer materials, and if you get one, know that pure Aloe Vera gel is the best soother.

The sun doesn't need to be an enemy. You can enjoy the sunshine and participate in the great outdoor activities, but be sure that you take the necessary precautions to protect yourself and your loved ones.

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