

# Sun Protection

# Skin cancers including Melanoma are the most frequently diagnosed cancers in the United States. Exposure to the suns UVA and UVB rays contribute to most cancers of the skin. With proper skin protection, the harmful effects of too much sun can be prevented. Blistering sunburns during childhood put an individual at greatest risk for skin cancers later in life.

# UVA and UVB rays:

# UVA rays are not absorbed by the ozone and contribute to aging and vision problems such as cataracts

# UVB rays are absorbed by the ozone and cause sunburn

# Look for a sunscreen that says “broad spectrum” meaning it provides UVA and UVB protection

How Do I Apply Sunscreen?

* Use a **broad-spectrum** sunscreen with an SPF rating of 30 or higher
* Apply sunscreen **20 minutes before** going out into the sun
* Use **generous amounts** and remember to “rub in” spray sunscreens
* According to the FDA, “water resistant” are effective for 40 minutes of water activity
* **Reapply** every 1-2 hours during outdoor activities

Other Important Ways to Protect Yourself and Children

* Avoid tanning beds and “suntanning”
* Always seek shade
* Check local weather forecasts for the UV index and avoid sun exposure when when the index is high

Sunscreen Ingredients: Physical ingredients cause fewer allergic skin reactions than chemical ingredients. Look for sunscreens with a combination of ingredients offering protection from UVA and UVB rays.

# What about infants?

# Sunscreens are approved for children older than 6 months of age. For infants 6 months or under be sure to keep skin covered with protective clothing when possible. Avoid sun exposure from 11am to 3pm when UV rays are at their peak. Seek shady areas when possible.

# It is safe to apply sunscreen to exposed areas of the skin (such as the face and hands) in infants less than 6 months of age if exposure cannot be avoided.

