SUNSCREEN

A comprehensive sun safety plan includes, limiting time in the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., planning outdoor activities in shaded areas, using sunscreen, and wearing protective clothing, hats and sunglasses.

- The application of sunscreen is key in ensuring sun safety.
- Limiting time in the sun when the sun's rays are strongest, and covering up with clothing and seeking shade also contribute to sun safe practices.
- Sunscreen helps to reduce the amount of sun exposure you get when working or playing outside.
- When covering up is not an option or shade is not available, sunscreen becomes even more important.

What to look for in a sunscreen

Look for a product that:

- protects against both UVA and UVB Rays - may be referred to as a "*Broad Spectrum Sunscreen"*
- has a minimum Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 30
- is waterproof
- is non-irritating and hypoallergenic
- includes zinc oxide or titanium dioxide
- has an expiry date

A list of approved sunscreens can be found on the Canadian Dermatology Association (CDA) website at http://www.dermatology.ca . Sunscreen that carries the CDA logo has passed the criteria established by the Canadian Dermatology Association.

Use of sunscreen on infants - under 12 months of age

Infant's skin is more sensitive as it has less melanin (i.e. skin pigment). It is recommended that children under 12 months be kept out of direct sunlight whenever possible. When outdoors, hats, clothing, shade, and umbrella's can serve as a physical source of protection from the sun's UV rays. Sunscreen should be used to supplement these other measures.

Remember to Slip on clothing, Slop on sunscreen and Slap on a hat.

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Use of sunscreen on children - over 12 months of age

To ensure sunscreen is effective:

- Ensure that all exposed areas of skin are covered when applying sunscreen.
- If too little sunscreen is applied and spread too thinly the protection offered by the product is reduced.
- Apply sunscreen 20-30 minutes before exposure and re-apply every 2 hours, especially after swimming and or physical activity.

<u>Frequently Asked Questions</u>

Are special "child friendly" sunscreens better to use with children?

- Look for products that meet sun safety criteria or have the Canadian Dermatological Association logo on them. In general, the only difference between those products marketed to the general public and those marketed to children is the packaging.

Do children require a higher Sun Protection Factor (SPF) in their sunscreen?

- If sunscreen is applied 20- 30 minutes before sun exposure and all exposed skin is covered, there is little difference (0.8%) in the amount of protection offered between an SPF 30 and SPF 40 sunscreen.

Are there ingredients in sunscreen that could cause an allergic reaction?

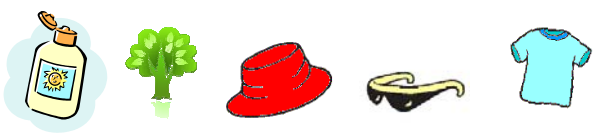
- PABA is the one ingredient that is known to cause an allergic reaction. Most sunscreens are now PABA free. Benzophenones (oxybenzone) have also been known to cause sensitivities. A "spot test" is recommended where one patch of skin is exposed to the product to see if an allergic reaction occurs.

What happens if application does not occur 20-30 minutes prior to exposure?

- Absorption time is important for full sun protection. However, if sunscreen contains zinc oxide or titanium dioxide then absorption time does not matter. These agents reflect ultraviolet light and do not need to be absorbed into the skin.

Do sun protection practices such as the use of sunscreen put children at risk of vitamin D deficiency?

- There are two primary sources of vitamin D. The first is from food. Brief exposure to the sun can also raise vitamin D levels. For most people small amounts of incidental unprotected exposure to the sun between April and October and eating foods with vitamin D provides an adequate supply.



SHADE

A comprehensive sun safety plan includes, limiting time in the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., planning outdoor activities in shaded areas, using sunscreen, and wearing protective clothing, hats and sunglasses.

Harmful ultraviolet rays can still pass through shade structures such as trees. Shade is part of a comprehensive approach to sun safety.

- Shade is key to ensuring sun safety and includes limiting time in the sun when the sun's rays are strongest.
- Shade can help to reduce the amount of sun exposure you get when working or playing outside.
- Between 11:00 a.m and 4:00 p.m. the sun's rays are strongest; plan your activities in shaded areas.

Sources of shade

The following physical structures can serve as sources of shade:

- Hedges, trees, gazebos, and sail shades
- Natural shade from trees and buildings
- Canopies and umbrellas

The location of the shade produced by trees or other physical structures moves throughout the day, according to the sun. Keep this in mind when planning outdoor activities so that you time activities to make the most of available shade.

Types of trees

Trees provide a great source of natural shade. Deciduous trees have an overhead canopy when the leaves are out, and allow for great protection from UV rays especially in the overhead mid-day sun. Coniferous trees provide some shade protection but do not have a canopy that provides mid-day protection. Choose trees whose leaves are non-toxic to people and animals.

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Creating your own shade

Building your own source of shade is another option. A well planned shade structure that is correctly positioned can provide shade to any area. Stand alone structures such as awnings can also add shade to any area.

- The material, colour and thickness of any shade structure can influence the amount of shade it provides.
- Bring along a shade umbrella when going on outings.

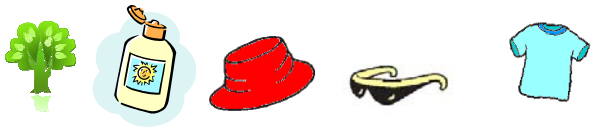
Conducting a shade audit can help to point out areas that can be enhanced by shade. For more information on how to conduct a shade audit go to: www.cancercare.ns.ca/childcare.

What can a shaded area be used for?

A shaded area can be used for a variety of activities. If positioned correctly, a shade structure can create shade during critical protection times (i.e. when's the sun's UV rays are the strongest).

Shaded areas can serve as multi- purpose areas for activities such as:

- facilitating play or work;
- small or large group activities;
- quiet areas for reading;
- for engaging in social play;
- socialization activities; and
- sports or other events for spectators.



THE UV INDEX

A comprehensive sun safety plan includes, limiting time in the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., planning outdoor activities in shaded areas, using sunscreen, and wearing protective clothing, hats and sunglasses.

Sun exposure facts:

- Over time ultraviolet (UV) radiation can be damaging to our skin. A high UV index can result in severe burns and skin damage.
- 42% of Atlantic Canadians spend at least 30 minutes in the sun without sun protection.
- 19% of Atlantic Canadians had at least one sunburn in the past year.
- About 80% of lifelong sun exposure occurs during childhood before the age of 18. Young children have sensitive skin that can burn easily.
- Even one damaging sunburn can increase your risk of developing skin cancer.
- Unprotected over-exposure to the sun can increase the risk of skin cancer, premature aging of the skin, damage to the eyes and weakening of the immune system.
- Proper precautions in childhood help reduce risks later in life.
- Avoiding overexposure, seeking shade, wearing sunscreen, protective clothing, hats and sunglasses help reduce these risks.

What is the UV Index?

- The daily UV Index serves as a guide to allow us to protect ourselves and use proper precautions when exposed to the sun.
- The UV Index informs us of the intensity of UV rays on any given day.

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- Follow the UV Index for scheduling activities and programs when the UV rays are the strongest.
- Sun exposure should be limited between 11AM- 4PM between April and September.
- Check the UV Index daily. Listen for Environment Canada's UV index report on your local weather channel or radio. It is included in the forecast when the UV index reaches 3+.

What Does the UV Index Mean?		
UV Index	**Category**	**Sun Protection Actions**
0 - 2	Low	Minimal protection for normal activity
3 - 5	Moderate	Cover up. Wear a hat, sunglasses, sunscreen if outside for 30 min.
6 - 7	High	Protection required. Reduce time in sun between 11AM and 4PM
8 - 10	Very High	Take full precautions and AVOID SUN between 11AM and 4PM
11+	Extreme	Take full precautions and AVOID SUN between 11AM and 4PM

Source: Environment Canada

What are UV rays?

- UV rays are invisible, high energy light. It is for this reason we can not see UV rays penetrating our skin, only the damage they produce.
- UV rays are strongest from spring until fall. Sun exposure should be limited between 11AM- 4PM during April - September. Seek shade when possible.
- During the summer months, UV rays can reflect off of water and sand
- During the winter, UV rays can still be damaging. Snow reflects UV rays and can increase the amount of UV radiation you receive by up to 85%.
- Practice sun safety year round by wearing sunscreen and sunglasses.

CLOTHING

A comprehensive sun safety plan includes, limiting time in the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., planning outdoor activities in shaded areas, using sunscreen, and wearing protective clothing, hats and sunglasses.

All clothing offers protection from the sun. Specialized clothing is one option but is not a requirement when addressing sun safety.

- Effective sun protection includes wearing clothing that covers our skin.
- ALL clothing acts as a physical barrier against ultraviolet rays. It protects our skin from sunburn and damage.
- Clothing is especially beneficial for children under 12 months of age.

Design

- Choose clothing that covers as much skin as possible, such as long sleeved shirts with collars.
- Test the protective ability of clothing: Hold clothing up to the sun. If you can see through the clothing, the sun's UV rays can penetrate through the clothing and reach your skin.

UPF

- UPF (ultraviolet protective factor) indicates how much of the sun's ultraviolet rays is absorbed by the clothing (does not penetrate to the skin).
- UPF refers to the material not the design of the clothing.
- Certain materials have been specially treated with chemical UV absorbers and have a specialized protective UPF clothing rating.

What to look for in clothing…

Fabrics with a tight weave

- Fabrics that are tightly woven allow less UV rays to pass through to the skin.
- Different fabrics absorb UV radiation at varying levels.

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Lightweight materials

- Fabrics such as linen, cotton, cotton/polyester and hemp offer protection from the sun while keeping you cool.

Choose darker coloured items

- Most dyes absorb UV rays. The darker the colour the more UV radiation absorbed.
- A green t-shirt offers a higher Ultraviolet Protective Factor (UPF) than a white t-shirt.

Condition matters…

- Clothing that has been stretched or is threadbare offers less UV protection due to gaps in the weave.
- When a piece of clothing becomes wet it looses up to 50% of its protective ability.
- Faded clothes offer less protection.

If purchasing UV treated clothing…

- Make sure the UPF rating is between 15 - 50+
- A UPF of 30 blocks 96.7 percent UV rays while a UPF of 50 blocks 98 % of rays.
- Read the label.

No fabric offers complete protection from UV rays. A comprehensive approach is needed when addressing sun safety (sunscreen, hats, shade, clothing, sunglasses).





HATS

A comprehensive sun safety plan includes, limiting time in the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., planning outdoor activities in shaded areas, using sunscreen, and wearing protective clothing, hats and sunglasses.

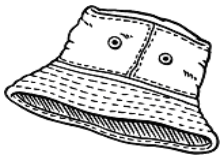
- Skin cancers occur in areas of the body that are exposed most often to the sun. The face, neck, lips, ears and back of the neck are among the most common places where skin cancers occur. Wearing a wide brim hat can help protect these areas from overexposure to the sun.

- Hats are a key part of an overall approach to sun safety that includes limiting your time in the sun when the sun's rays are strongest, covering up with clothing, seeking shade and using sunscreen.

- Include the use of a wide-brimmed hat as part of a comprehensive approach to sun safety. The adoption of sun safe behaviours during childhood can help reduce the risks of skin cancer later in life.

To protect the face, neck, ears and nose wear a wide brimmed hat.

The brims of hats should be at least 7.5 cm. and should be proportional to the face. The brim should cover the face and provide a shaded area over the neck, ears, face and nose.



Bucket hats should have a brim of at least 6 cm and a deep crown.

Baseball hats and visors do not offer adequate protection to the cheeks, neck and ears. They are not recommended for sun protection.

Choose a hat…

- That provides shade to the face, back of neck and ears.
- Fits properly
- Allows air flow and is cool.
- Has tightly woven fabric as this allows less UV radiation to pass through.

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SIX SUN SAFETY STEPS

1. **Spend most outdoor play time before 11: 00 a.m. or after 4:00 p.m. when possible.**

2. **Seek shade or create your own.**

3. **Slip on clothing.**

4. **Slap on a wide brim hat.**

5. **Slop on sunscreen.**

6. **Slide on sunglasses.**

A comprehensive sun safety plan includes: limiting time in the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m.; planning outdoor activities in shaded areas; using sunscreen; and wearing protective clothing, hats and sunglasses.

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