

Sun Protection

It certainly seems like being tan is cool, and now that summer has arrived, getting that perfect tan will be on many people's minds. But a lot of people aren't aware of just how much damage the sun can do. With skin cancer on the rise and the protection from the ozone decreasing, it is more important than ever to be wearing sunscreen.

Sun damage happens slowly. You don't get skin cancer after a day at the beach. Sun damage happens one day at a time, and you often don't realize the irreversible damage has happened until it is too late.

Sun damage also leads to prematurely aged skin. This includes brown spots, skin discoloration, the appearance of red facial veins, blotchiness, and wrinkles. It seems like sun screen is the fountain of youth!

Now I hear you saying, "What about Vitamin D?" Well, we get our needed Vitamin D intake by going outside for 45 minutes to an hour over the course of a week, which most of us do anyway. Neglecting sunscreen isn't increasing your Vitamin D but exposing your skin to harmful UV rays.

Here are some tips for wearing sunscreen:

- Wear it, even when it is cloudy out
- Wear it in the winter, because snow reflects the UV rays and doubles your UV exposure
- Apply it 20 minutes before you leave your home, so it has time to absorb into your skin
- Re-apply every 2 hours
- Re-apply after going in the water, there is no such thing as waterproof sunscreen
- If you work outside or if you have a child, take extra care in protecting your skin
- Wear it even if you have a darker skin tone, anyone can get skin cancer regardless of skin tone
- Wear sunscreen that blocks out both UVA and UVB rays
- Sunscreen SPF should be a minimum of 30 (which blocks out 97% of UVB rays), but after SPF 45 (which blocks out 98%) there isn't much of a different in protection

Sources: <http://www.webmd.com/beauty/features/high-spf-sunscreens-are-they-better>
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