

Stay safe in the sun

We all love a sunny day, but it's important to protect yourself and those in your care and be mindful of how long you've been outside. Cancer Research UK (CRUK) and Public Health England (PHE) are campaigning to raise awareness of skin cancer due to a high level of exposure to the sun by advising and supporting people in how to reduce their cancer risk.

Sunscreen and sun safety

Sunburn increases your risk of skin cancer. Sunburn does not just happen on holiday. You can burn in the UK, even when it's cloudy. There's no safe or healthy way to get a tan. A tan does not protect your skin from the sun's harmful effects. Aim to strike a balance between protecting yourself from the sun and getting enough vitamin D from sunlight. People of all skin colours should take care to avoid damage to the eyes, overheating and dehydration. Remember - it's not just sunbathing that puts you at risk, but being in the sun without adequate protection. If you regularly take part in outdoor hobbies or sports, or work outdoors you could be at greater risk. Make sure you use all of the Five S's of Sun Safety and NEVER BURN!

1. **SLIP** on a t-shirt
2. **SLOP** on SPF 30+ broad spectrum UVA sunscreen
3. **SLAP** on a broad brimmed hat
4. **SLIDE** on quality sunglasses
5. **SHADE** from the sun whenever possible

Outdoor workers

If work keeps you outdoors for a long time your skin could be exposed to more sun than is healthy for you. Outdoor workers that could be at risk include farm or construction workers, market gardeners, outdoor activity workers and some public service workers. You should take particular care if you have:

- fair or freckled skin that doesn't tan, or goes red or burns before it tans;
- red or fair hair and light coloured eyes;
- a large number of moles.

The sun and your skin

Too much sunlight is harmful to your skin. A tan is a sign that the skin has been damaged. The damage is caused by ultraviolet (UV) rays in sunlight.

Harmful effects in the short term, even mild reddening of the skin from sun exposure is a sign of damage. Sunburn can blister the skin and make it peel. Longer term problems can arise. Too much sun speeds up ageing of the skin, making it leathery, mottled and wrinkled. The most serious effect is an increased chance of developing skin cancer.

You can protect your family, friends and those you care for from the dangers of sun exposure in the following ways:

- Too much ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun/sunbeds is the main cause of skin cancer and even in the UK, the sun can be strong enough to cause damage to your skin.
- Sunburn can easily catch you out, especially if you have fair skin, lots of moles/freckles, red/fair hair or light coloured eyes. So it's important we are protected when the sun is strong.

Try the shadow rule: UV rays from the sun are strongest when your shadow is shorter than you, so that's when you're more likely to burn.

Sun safety tips: Spend time in the shade when the sun is strongest. In the UK, this is between 11am and 3pm from March to October.

Make sure that:

- you never burn;
- you wear a hat, t-shirt and sunglasses to cover up for protection;
- you take extra care with children;
- you use umbrellas, trees or canopies or head indoors;
- you use sunscreen, put plenty on and remember to re-apply.

For further information, please visit

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/sunscreen-and-sun-safety/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/heatwave-how-to-cope-in-hot-weather/>

<http://www.skcin.org/sunSafetyAndPrevention/theFiveSsOfSunSafety.htm>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/skin/sunprotect.htm>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/how-to-get-vitamin-d-from-sunlight/>