



From Our Wesley Nurse . . .

Summer is here and so is the Sun!

It's just smart to take good care of your skin

The need to protect your skin from the sun has become very clear over the years, supported by several studies linking overexposure to the sun with skin cancer. The harmful ultraviolet rays from both the sun and indoor tanning “sunlamps” can cause many other complications besides skin cancer - such as eye problems, a weakened immune system, age spots, wrinkles, and leathery skin.

How to protect your skin:

There are simple, everyday steps you can take to safeguard your skin from the harmful effects of UV radiation from the sun.

- **Wear proper clothing-**Wear protective clothing such as long-sleeved shirts and pants. Wear a hat and UV-resistant sunglasses to protect your head and eyes.
- **Avoid the burn-** Sunburns significantly increase one's lifetime risk of developing skin cancer. It is especially important that children be kept from sunburns as well.
- **Go for the shade-** Stay out of the sun, if possible, between the peak burning hours, which, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO), are between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- **Use extra caution when near reflective surfaces, like water and sand-** Water, sand and even the windows of a building can reflect the damaging rays of the sun. That can increase your chance of sunburn, even if you're in what you consider a shady spot.
- **Use extra caution when at higher altitudes-** You can experience more UV exposure at higher altitudes, because there is less atmosphere to absorb UV radiation.
- **Apply broad-spectrum sunscreen-** Generously apply broad-spectrum sunscreen to cover all exposed skin. The “broad spectrum” variety protects against overexposure to ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) rays. The FDA recommends using sunscreens that are not only broad spectrum, but that, also have a sun protection factor (SPF) value of at least 15 for protection against sun-induced skin problems.
- **Re-apply broad-spectrum sunscreen throughout the day-** Even if a sunscreen is labeled as “water-resistant,” it must be reapplied throughout the day, especially after sweating or swimming. To be safe, apply sunscreen at a rate of one ounce every two hours. Depending on how much of the body needs coverage, a full-day (six-hour) outing could require one whole tube of sunscreen.
- **Protecting your eyes-**UV rays can also penetrate the structures of your eyes and cause cell damage. According to the CDC, some of the more common sun-related vision problems include cataracts, macular degeneration, and pterygium (non-cancerous growth of the conjunctiva that can obstruct vision).
- **Wear a wide-brimmed hat-** To protect your vision, wear a wide-brimmed hat that keeps your face and eyes shaded from the sun at most angles.
- **Wear wrap-around style sunglasses with 99 or higher UV block-** Effective sunglasses should block glare, block 99 to 100% of UV rays, and have a wraparound shape to protect eyes from most angles.