



BE SUN SAFE WHEN HEADING OUTDOORS

It's fun to be outdoors with family and friends, but we need to protect ourselves from the sun's harmful ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) rays. Over time, too much sun and repeated sunburns can increase the risk of skin cancer, cause our skin to age prematurely, weaken our immune systems and damage our eyes. Here are some sun safety tips to keep your family safe when they are outside.

Heading outdoors? Stay in the shade, cover up and use sunscreen

- **Stay in the shade:** Limit your exposure to the sun, especially between 11 am and 4 pm, or when the UV index is 3 or more. If possible, plan outdoor activities earlier or later in the day when the sun is not as strong. Take an umbrella if you are going somewhere that does not have any shade. Tip: If your shadow is shorter than you are, find some shade or go inside.
- **Cover up:** Wear protective clothing, wide-brimmed hats, and sunglasses with 100% UV protection. Where possible, choose wrap around sun glasses.
- **Use sunscreen:** Use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher. Look for the term "broad spectrum" on the label. This means the sunscreen helps protect against both UVA and UVB rays.
 - Apply sunscreen generously 20 minutes before going outside. Apply more sunscreen 20 minutes after being outside to maximize your protection. Then reapply sunscreen every 2 hours and after swimming or sweating.
 - The ears, nose and lips, back of the neck and knees, and tops of the feet need sunscreen too.
 - Look for an expiry date on the container or package. Replace expired sunscreen.

Babies and young children need extra protection from the sun

- Sunburns can be very serious for babies and young children. Their sensitive skin burns easily. Keep babies under one year of age out of direct sunlight to prevent dehydration and skin damage. Always keep them in the shade; under a tree, umbrella or stroller canopy.
- Babies and children should wear protective wide-brimmed hats, loose fitting clothing, such as long sleeved tops and pants, and sunglasses. Try to keep toddlers and young children out of the sun, especially between 11 am and 4 pm when the sun's UV rays are the strongest. Teach them to play in the shade.
- Do not use sunscreen on babies under 6 months of age. For older children, use sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher. Reapply sunscreen when children have been in the water.
- In bright sunlight, children should wear hats and sunglasses to protect their eyes. Don't apply sunscreen around their eyes as it may sting or cause irritation.
- More information is available at this link: [Health Canada, Babies, Children and Sun Safety](#).

Did you know?



- Sunscreen is needed on cloudy days too. The sun's UV rays can go through light cloud cover, fog and haze.
- Daily Environment Canada UV Index forecasts are on radio, TV and in the newspaper. The UV index is also available at [Environment Canada, UV Index and Sun Protection](#).
- Harmful UVB rays can reflect off sand, concrete, water and snow.
- Baby oil does not protect children (or anyone else) from the sun.
- Sun damage builds up with each exposure to the sun.
- Sunscreen comes in many forms, including lotions, creams, gels, sticks and sprays. Some sunscreens are waterproof or sweat proof. Choose one that suits you and your family.
- Sunscreen with an SPF of 15, blocks 93% of the UVB rays. Sunscreen with an SPF of 30, blocks 97% of the UVB rays. (Source: [Canadian Cancer Society](#))
- Sunscreen should not be used to extend the amount of time one can stay in the sun. Use sun screen along with other forms of sun protection such as hats and clothing, to protect any exposed skin. (Source: [Canadian Dermatology Association, Sunscreen FAQs](#))
- People can use both sunscreen and insect repellent to protect their health when they are outdoors. Apply the sunscreen first and then apply the insect repellent. Follow the package directions when applying each product. (Source: [Health Canada, Healthy Living, Air and Sun](#))

Need more sun safety information? Click on the links below:

1. [Alberta Cancer Board, Sun Safety](#)
2. [Canadian Cancer Society, Use Sun Sense](#) (try their sun sense quiz)
3. [Canadian Dermatology Association, Shade](#)
4. [Canadian Dermatology Association, Sun Safety Resources](#)
5. [The Canadian Dermatology Association, Sun and Vision Safety](#)
6. [The Canadian Dermatology Association, Sun Protection for Children and Teenagers](#)
7. [Health Canada, Healthy Living, Sun Safety](#)

For more information, please call the Environmental Health Program, Alberta Health Services at 403-943-2288 or click on the Environmental Health website:

<http://www.calgaryhealthregion.ca/publichealth/envhealth/>

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