



# Here Comes the Sun: A Guide to Sunscreen

The sun's powerful rays heat our planet, help our bodies produce Vitamin D, and improve our mental health. However, they also contain dangerous UVA & UVB radiation which causes sunburns, signs of aging like sunspots or wrinkles, allergic reactions, and even cancer. Whether you're going on a beach vacation, an afternoon hike, or spending some quality time in the backyard, protecting yourself and your family from the sun is key to prevent these potentially harmful conditions.

## How can I protect my child from the sun?

One great way to start is by wearing sun-protective clothing, such as hats, long sleeves, and long pants. You can also make plans go inside or find a nice, shady spot during the peak-hours of the day (usually between 10am and 4pm). When these measures are impossible or impractical, sunscreen is another great line of defense.

## Which sunscreen should I use?

There are so many types and brands of sunscreens available – it can be hard to choose! Whatever brand you prefer, I recommend you select a product that has the following properties:

- **Mineral-based.** These formulations are less likely to provoke an allergic reaction than those that are based on organic compounds, such as avobenzone.
- **Broad spectrum** to protect against both UVA & UVB rays.
- **Sweat/water resistant** formulations will withstand sweat, ocean/lake water and pool water for longer periods.
- **SPF-30.**
- The packaging will state whether the sunscreen meets these criteria.

## How do I put sunscreen on?

Even more important than the type of sunscreen is how you put it on. **Sunscreen should be applied liberally 20 minutes before going out in the sun and should be reapplied every 2 hours.** An average teen needs roughly 6 teaspoons per application, while an average 4-year-old would need about 4 teaspoons. A 1-year-old needs 2 teaspoons.

## Who should wear sunscreen?

All adults, teens, and children over 6 months old should wear sunscreen when they spend time outside, regardless of their skin type.

## Can my baby wear sunscreen?

**Children less than 6 months old should NOT wear sunscreen.** This population should stay inside or underneath a sun-protective shade structure and wear sun-protective clothing. A mineral-based product with SPF-15 may be used in small amounts over small areas, such as the face and backs of hands.

Now, go enjoy some fun in the sun this summer!