



# Summer Sun Safety

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## Golden Rules:

- 1) Do not rely solely on sunscreen to protect your child's skin.
- 2) Children younger than 6 months should NOT be in direct sunlight. Keep them under a canopy or UV sun shield/tent and not outside during the sun's peak hours especially from 10 am to 4 pm.
- 3) Wear protective clothing when possible. Loose clothing with a tight weave that blocks sunlight or UV rated swimwear is a great option.
- 4) Wear hats with wide brims to shield your face and neck.
- 5) Limit time spent in the sun mid-day when the sun peaks especially from 10 am to 4 pm.
- 6) Wear sunglasses with a minimum of 99% UV protection. They do make these in kid sizes, but they can be hard to find.
- 7) Wear sunscreen. See below for details.

## Sunscreens:

- 1) Use a "broad-spectrum" sunscreen that protects against both UVA (ultraviolet A) and UVB (ultraviolet B) light both of which can cause skin cancer, skin damage and premature aging.
- 2) Your sunscreen should have a minimum of a SPF (sun protection factor) 15. SPF denotes the level of protection against UVB light. UVB light is primarily responsible for sunburns.
- 3) Your sunscreen should have UVA light protection. UVA light is deep penetrating and is the light responsible for tanning. There has been a movement by the FDA to denote the amount of UVA protection in sunscreen via a star rating system. As of April 2011 sunscreen manufacturers have still not included this on their product labels.
- 4) For sensitive areas like your child's face, use a "blocking" product that contains zinc or titanium dioxide. These are often opaque white, but many companies are now making a clear version.

## Application:

- 1) Make sure your child is not allergic to new sunscreen by applying the new product to a small area prior to his/her first full day out in the sun.
- 2) Apply liberally all over your child's body. Do not miss his/her ears, face, neck, backs of knees, hands etc
- 3) Rub it in well.
- 4) Apply sunscreen 30 minutes prior to going outside.
- 5) Reapply sunscreen a minimum of every 2 hours and more frequently (every hour) if swimming or sweating.

Resources: What's the best way to protect my child in the sun? [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org)