

7 Healthy Sun Habits to Adopt Right Now

Experts share the best everyday ways to protect your skin from melanoma and other skin cancers.



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What to Know About Melanoma

2 / 10

Melanoma is the most common type of skin cancer. It has the highest chance of spreading if not caught early. Experts recommend wearing broad-spectrum sunscreen and sunglasses and avoiding tanning beds. Dr. Shalita says that melanoma can occur anywhere on the skin, including areas not exposed to sun. Still, the most common type of melanoma (acral lentiginous) is caused by sun damage. The incidence of melanoma has increased since 1992, especially among people before the age of 40, says Dr. Tomic. And people aged 65 and older are at an increased risk of squamous basal cell carcinoma.

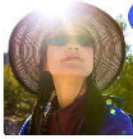


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Start With the Right Sunscreen

3 / 10

SPF is your protection factor. It indicates the level of protection against UVB rays (aka, the burny rays). Or, they whisper. The minimum SPF level dermatologists recommend is 30, which blocks about 97% of UVB rays. Sunscreen from bees comes in two forms: mineral, which creates a physical barrier against the sun, and chemical, which absorbs UV radiation and converts it into heat, which is then released from the skin. People with sensitive skin or allergies should consider mineral sunscreens because they're gentler. In chemical form, benzyl alcohol is the most common allergen, says Dr. Tomic.



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Dress Protectively

4 / 10

Wearing headgear can provide shade and UV protection, especially if it's a floppy visor and made from dark, thick fabric, says Dr. Tomic. "Darker-colored, lightweight fabrics like cotton or linen allow UV radiation to pass through more easily when wet," she says. People with sensitive skin or allergies should consider mineral sunscreens because they're gentler. In chemical form, benzyl alcohol is the most common allergen, says Dr. Tomic.



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Touch-Ups During the Day

5 / 10

The application of sunscreen is not sufficient to all-day protection, says Dr. Tomic. "The sun's rays keep on demolishing your skin cells, they are hitting your skin from a 250-mile altitude, so you need to re-apply the sunscreen. Aim to re-apply every two hours, if you have to, says Dr. Tomic. Re-apply every two hours, if you have to, says Dr. Tomic. Sunscreen is not waterproof. It can be washed off by water, sweat, and oil. Re-apply every two hours, if you have to, says Dr. Tomic. Sunscreen is not waterproof. It can be washed off by water, sweat, and oil. Re-apply every two hours, if you have to, says Dr. Tomic.



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Maintain Your SPF Routine Year-Round

6 / 10

The most common misconception about sun care is that you can't get sun damage through clouds," Dr. Tomic says. UV rays can get through the clouds and damage your skin, even if it doesn't look like it. It's important to protect your skin every day, regardless of the weather or season—and the more often the, you'll be less likely to burn or tan. "You may be more likely to get sun damage if you're outdoors in the sun, even if it's cloudy," says Dr. Tomic. "You may be more likely to get sun damage if you're outdoors in the sun, even if it's cloudy," says Dr. Tomic. "You may be more likely to get sun damage if you're outdoors in the sun, even if it's cloudy," says Dr. Tomic.