

VUJEVICH DERMATOLOGY ASSOCIATES

SUN SCREEN FACT SHEET

Sunscreen use can help prevent skin cancer by protecting you from the harmful ultraviolet rays. Anyone can get skin cancer, regardless of age, gender or race. It is estimated that one in five Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime.

The American Academy of Dermatology recommend everyone use a sunscreen that offers:

1. Broad – spectrum protection (protects against UVA and UVB rays).
2. SPF 30 or higher
3. Water resistant

Sunscreen products are regulated as over the counter drugs from the US Food and Drug Administration.

FACTS:

- US Department of Health and Human Services and the WHO International Agency of Research on Cancer have declared UV radiation from the sun and artificial sources to be a known carcinogen (cancer causing).
- FDA requires all sunscreens retain the original strength for at least 3 years.
- Sunscreen should be worn every day you go outside, even cloudy days.
- Apply enough sunscreen to cover all exposed skin.
- Most adults need 1 ounce – or enough to fill a shot glass to fully cover the body.
- Apply to dry skin 15 minutes before going outdoors.
- UVA rays (aging rays) can prematurely age your skin, causing wrinkles and age spots.
- UVB rays (burning rays) are the primary cause of sunburn.

TYPES OF SUNSCREEN:

- Creams are best for dry skin and the face.
- Gels are good for hairy areas.
- Sticks are good to use around the eyes.
- Sprays: current FDA regulations on testing and standardization do not pertain to these types.
- Sprays: do not inhale; spray adequate amount and rub into skin to ensure even coverage.
- Chemical sunscreens work like a sponge, absorbing the sun's rays.
- Physical sunscreens work like a shield, sitting on the surface of your skin.

Using sunscreens, seeking shade and wearing protective clothing are all important behaviors to reduce your risk of skin cancer. Scientific evidence supports the benefits of using sunscreen to minimize short term and long term damage to the skin from the sun's rays.