



Staying Safe in the Sun

Sun safety is vitally important, particularly for babies and children who have delicate skin that burns easily.

Protecting children from the harmful effects of the sun limits the risk of them developing skin cancer in later life. Always follow the 'SunSmart' message:

Spend time in the shade between 11am and 3pm

Make sure you never burn

Aim to cover up with a t-shirt, hat and sunglasses

Remember to take extra care with children

Then use factor 15+ sunscreen

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For additional fact sheets see www.ihv.org.uk

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- Take particular care with very young children. If you have a baby under 6 months old keep them out of direct sunlight, especially in the middle of the day when the sun is at its strongest.
- Always protect your child's skin using sun cream and make sure they wear a hat on hot days. If it's warm but overcast, you still need to use sun screen.
- Make sure you use a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 (and higher if you are travelling abroad - a very high factor sun block developed for babies and children offers the best protection in warmer climates). Sun screen has a use by date, so if your bottle is older than 6 months it won't fully protect your child. Always buy a new bottle if in doubt.
- Buy a sunscreen with both protection against UVA and UVB rays and apply cream liberally. Make sure any area of exposed skin is covered and don't forget to apply to ears, feet, hands and the back of the neck. Make sure you reapply cream to your child's skin throughout the day.
- The shoulders and back of neck are particularly susceptible to sunburn so take extra care in protecting these areas. If you're on the beach or your child is playing outside without their top off, make sure they cover up during the hottest part of the day or if they begin to look pink. Use a loose-fitting t-shirt or specially designed sun-top.
- Encourage children to play in the shade between the hours of 11am and 3pm when the sun is at its strongest. If you're on holiday use this time to have lunch in the shade, or put your baby or toddler down for a nap. Older children can still have fun as long as they stay out of the sun - playing in the full glare of the sun or in the swimming pool or sea during these hours puts them at risk of burning, even if they are using sun protection.
- Use a waterproof sunblock of factor 15 or above if your child is swimming, and reapply cream when they come out of the water.
- Eyes can also get damaged by the sun so it's important to protect your child's eyes with sunglasses. When buying glasses make sure they carry both the BSEN 1836:2005 and CE kite marks.
- Some sun creams can aggravate eczema so if your child has the skin condition make sure you check sun cream for ingredients you know your child is allergic to. Test the cream on a small area of skin first. If it doesn't cause any irritation, apply your child's normal emollient or steroid cream first, wait for 30 minutes and then fully apply the sunscreen. We have more information on our separate fact sheet on eczema which you may like to take a look at.

More information:

You can read further tips on staying safe in the sun, including helpful videos on how to apply sun cream, at:

bit.ly/1rEOman