

# Sun Safety Recommendations

Over-exposure to (UV) radiation is the prime cause of sunburn, skin aging and skin cancer.

Here are a few guidelines to help you enjoy the sun safely:

- **Stay out of the sun from 11:00 - 4:00** because harmful UV radiation is strongest during these hours.
- **Seek Shade or Create Your Own** with umbrellas, awnings, or trees.
- **Cover-up with clothing** as clothing acts as a physical block to stop the sun's rays getting through to your skin. Closely-knit fabrics work best. Any garment that you can see through also lets UV rays through. Remember, when a fabric is wet, it loses some of its ability to block out solar rays, as the material becomes more transparent and allows light to penetrate through to the skin.
- **Wear a Hat** with a wide-brim (3-4" wide on all sides). Although baseball caps are popular, they offer little protection to the face, neck and ears.
- **Wear Sunscreen.** Dermatologists recommend you use sunscreen that has Sun Protecting Factor (SPF) of 30 that screens out most of both UVB and UVA rays of the sun. Apply sunscreen at least 15 to 30 minutes before you go out to allow the active ingredients to soak into the skin. Reapply every 2-3 hours to maintain protection. Don't forget to use sunscreen on the ears, nose and neck, since these are the areas where skin cancers often occur. Skin cancer also appears on the lips, so use a SPF 30 sunscreen lip balm as well and reapply it.
- **Wear Sunglasses** that block 100% UV rays, as UV radiation can cause eye irritation and tissue damage.
- **Follow the [Environment Canada](#) UV Index Sun Protection Recommended Actions**

UV Index	Category	Sun Protection Actions
0-2	Low	Sunscreen and sunglasses are recommended for those in the sun longer than 1 hour. Reflection off the snow can double UV strength, this is why sunglasses and sunscreen is recommended.
3-5	Moderate	Take precautions – cover-up, wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen that have an SPF of 30, especially if you will be outside for 30 minutes or more. Look for shade near midday when the sun is the strongest.
6-7	High	Protection required – unprotected skin will be damaged and can burn quickly. Reduce time in the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. and take full precautions – seek shade (i.e. trees, umbrellas, awnings), cover-up, wear a hat with a wide brim or a flat that covers the back of your neck, wear UV protective sunglasses and sunscreen with a SPF of 30.
8-10	Very High	Extra Precautions required – unprotected skin will be damaged and can burn quickly. Avoid time in the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. and take full precautions – seek shade (i.e. trees, umbrellas, awnings), cover-up, wear a hat with a wide brim or a flat that covers the back of your neck, wear UV protective sunglasses and sunscreen with a SPF of 30.
11 +	Extreme	Values of 11 or more are very rare in Canada, but can be reached in southern US, tropical destinations. Take full precautions - Avoid time in the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. and take full precautions – seek shade (i.e. trees, umbrellas, awnings), cover-up, wear a hat with a wide brim or a flat that covers the back of your neck, wear UV protective sunglasses and sunscreen with a SPF of 30. White sand and other bright surfaces reflect UV and increase UV exposure.