

# Sun Safety

Sunburn, skin cancers, and other sun-related adverse health effects are largely preventable when sun



protection is practiced early and consistently. Despite the fact that suntanning and burning increase skin cancer risks, most Americans do not protect themselves from the sun's damaging rays.

Overexposure to UV radiation can have adverse health effects. It is the primary environmental risk factor in the UV-related adverse health effects, including diseases of the eye, immune suppression and skin cancer.

Children are most at risk for overexposure to UV radiation. With one in five Americans developing skin cancer, childhood education about sun protection is a vital step toward reducing risk and improving public health. Many studies have concluded that sun exposure, especially sunburn, during childhood appears to increase the risk of melanoma, the most serious form of skin cancer. Just one or two blistering sunburns in childhood can double a person's risk of developing melanoma later in life.

Children are of particular concern because they spend a lot of time outdoors. However, if sun protection practices are followed early and consistently, adverse health effects are largely preventable.

