

Sunscreen and Sun Protection for Your Child

Daily sun protection is the best thing you can do to decrease the chance of getting skin cancer. Encourage your adolescent to start this healthy habit now!

Babies under 6 months:

The recommendations from the AAP to prevent sunburn are: AVOID SUN EXPOSURE and DRESS THE INFANT IN LIGHTWEIGHT COTTON CLOTHING THAT COVERS THEIR BODIES. You can do this by having your baby wear lightweight cotton pants, long sleeved cotton shirt, wide brimmed hats. Place your infant in the shade. If you cannot adequately cover up your child's face and the tops of their hands, you may use Sunscreen with SPF 30 to only these areas. Minimize sun exposure between 10 am until 4 pm.

Babies over 6 months and Children:

Apply sunscreen with SPF 15-30, 30 minutes prior to going outside. Please purchase sunscreen with UVA and UVB protection. Do this everyday, even cloudy, overcast days. Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours while outside, more if your child is wet or sweaty. Try to keep your child covered up as much as possible with a hat, sunglasses, lightweight cotton clothing. Minimize sun exposure between 10 am until 4 pm.

Things to look for in Sunscreen: UVA and UVB coverage and SPF 15-30. Studies are still pending to see if SPF > 30 offers more protection. Ingredients like zinc oxide, titanium dioxide, Parsol 1789, Helioplex, or Mexoryl are the best. Avoid oxybenzone and avobenzone---there are hormonal concerns associated with this.

There is special children's sun protectant clothing available. Here are resources for these products:

Alpha/Radicool Company (SPF 100) 1.877.266.7297

Solumbra 1.800.882.7860 or www.sunprecautions.com

Coolibar 1.800.926.6507 x 13 or www.coolibar.com

If your child has an allergic reaction to sunscreen or lotions, you may want to try Neutrogena Baby or Vanicream Sunscreen. According to Dermatologists, these are best for sensitive skins. Vanicream Sunscreen has only Zinc Oxide with no added chemicals. It can be found most easily on the internet.

If your child will be outdoors and in the heat for several hours, make sure they are drinking lots of fluids. An example would be: a 90 pound child should drink 5 ounces of cold tap water or sports drink every 20 minutes.

Information compiled from AAP website and CMH Dermatology. 2019

