

SUNSCREEN AND SUN SAFETY

Sunburn increases your risk of skin cancer. Sunburn doesn't just happen on holiday – you can burn in the UK, even when it's cloudy. There's no safe or healthy way to get a tan. A tan doesn't protect your skin from the sun's harmful effects.

Aim to strike a balance between protecting yourself from the sun and getting enough vitamin D from sunlight.

Sun safety tips

Spend time in the shade when the sun is strongest. In the UK, this is between 11am and 3pm from March to October.

Make sure you:

- spend time in the shade between 11am and 3pm
- make sure you never burn
- cover up with suitable clothing and sunglasses
- take extra care with children
- use at least factor 15 sunscreen

Don't rely on sunscreen alone to protect yourself from the sun. Wear suitable clothing and spend time in the shade when the sun's at its hottest.

When buying sunscreen, the label should have:

- a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 to protect against UVB
- at least four-star UVA protection

UVA protection can also be indicated by the letters "UVA" in a circle, which indicates that it meets the EU standard. Make sure the sunscreen is not past its expiry date. Most sunscreens have a shelf life of two to three years. Don't spend any longer in the sun than you would without sunscreen.

Protect your eyes in the sun - A day at the beach without proper eye protection can cause a temporary but painful burn to the surface of the eye, similar to sunburn. Reflected sunlight from snow, sand, concrete and water, and artificial light from sunbeds, is particularly dangerous. Avoid looking directly at the sun, as this can cause permanent eye damage.

Clothing and sunglasses - Wear clothes and sunglasses that provide sun protection, such as:

- a wide-brimmed hat that shades the face, neck and ears
- a long-sleeved top
- trousers or long skirts in close-weave fabrics that don't allow sunlight through
- sunglasses with wraparound lenses or wide arms with the CE Mark and European Standard EN 1836:2005

If you've had skin cancer, you should avoid spending too long in the sun. Use a product with at least an SPF of 15. Your skin cancer specialist might suggest a high factor sunscreen such as 50 on any exposed skin. The SPF is to give you extra protection. It does not mean you can safely sunbathe.