

Sunscreen SPFs & Sunburns

WHAT TO DO IF YOU GET A SUNBURN

First degree sunburns affect the first layer of skin and cause pain and redness. Second degree burns injure the top two layers of skin, causing them to separate into blisters. Both are treated symptomatically, with cold compresses, acetaminophen, or non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs). Be careful not to open blisters, and keep blisters and underlying vulnerable skin clean and free from infection. Contact your medical provider if none of these measures work.

This report was compiled by Ammonoosuc Community Health Services, Inc. (ACHS) clinical staff for informational purposes, and does not replace any advice one might receive from a qualified health care provider.

Founded in 1975, Ammonoosuc Community Health Services is a nonprofit community health center offering a network of quality, affordable primary health services. Our programs promote and support the well-being of individuals and families by emphasizing preventive care and encouraging active participation in one's own health. ACHS serves 26 towns in northern Grafton and southern Coos counties and has sites located in Littleton, Franconia, Whitefield, Warren and Woodsville. We provide comprehensive services, regardless of one's ability to pay, to nearly 10,000 patients.



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Your Community Health Partner for Life

Information for a Healthy Life



Sunscreen SPFs & Sunburns

*What you need to know to
protect you and your family*



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Sunscreen, SPFs & Sunburn

Summer's here - take measures to protect yourself from the misery and dangers of sunburn.

HOW TO CHOOSE A SUNSCREEN

It is easy to protect yourself once you know what to look for in a Sun Protection Factor (SPF). SPFs range from 4 to 100. A sunscreen with an SPF of 25 will allow you to be exposed to the sun 25 times longer than you would if you were not wearing sunscreen.



SPFs block the wearer from cancer causing and sun-burning effects of the sun's ultra-violet B (UVB) rays. Although they do not cause sunburn, ultra-violet A (UVA) rays increase the risk of skin cancers, such as basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and melanoma, as well as promote wrinkles.

For your best chances of avoiding sunburn all together, choose tightly knit, loose fitting, long sleeved clothing and a wide brimmed hat and apply sunscreen to any exposed areas. When using a sunscreen, choose an SPF of at least 15-30 and one that blocks both UVA and UVB rays. For those with particularly fair skin, a history of skin cancer, or taking certain medications, a sunscreen with an SPF greater than 30 should be used.

For more information on how to choose a sunscreen, watch the youtube video at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJCel6xmtbG&feature=relmfu>

WHAT ABOUT BABIES & SENSITIVE SKIN

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends babies younger than 6 months of age not have sunscreen applied to them or have direct exposure to the sun. Babies older than 6 months and persons with a history of allergies or skin sensitivities are best to select sunscreens that are PABA (Para-amino benzoic acid) free as it is a particularly irritating ingredient. For more information: www.skincancer.org/prevention/sun-protection/children/sun-safety-tips-for-infants-babies-and-toddlers

HOW TO APPLY SUNSCREEN

For maximum effectiveness, sunscreens should be applied 20 minutes prior to sun exposure and should be reapplied after sweating or swimming or every 2-3 hours in the sun. Water and sweat resistant sunscreens only afford protection during 40 minutes of water activity and are not waterproof.



If creams and reapplication are not for you, then perhaps sun protective clothing with an SPF of 30 is. Wearing protective clothing, wide brimmed hats, avoiding exposure between the most intense sunlight hours (10am and 4 pm) and spending time in the shade are other preventive measures for avoiding sunburn.