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SpotSkinCancer.org

Sun Protection for Athletes



Depending on your sport, athletes can spend many hours in the mid-day sun, practicing or competing. Without proper sun protection, you are not only increasing your risk of sunburn, which can hamper your ability to compete, but also increasing your risk of developing skin cancer in the future. Preventing overexposure to the sun is one of the highly preventable steps athletes and everyone can take to reduce the risk of skin cancer.

Follow these tips to protect your skin when outdoors practicing or competing:

- **Seek shade.** The sun's rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. If your shadow appears to be shorter than you are, the sun's rays are strongest and you should seek shade.
- Try to schedule activities to avoid these peak sun hours. Encourage your coaches to schedule practices and games early in the day or later in the afternoon, when possible.
- **Wear protective clothing**, such as a lightweight, long-sleeved shirt and pants, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunglasses, where possible.
- Most clothing absorbs or reflects some UV rays. However, light-colored and loose-knit fabrics, as well as wet clothes that cling to the skin, do not offer much sun protection. In general, the tighter the weave of the fabric and the darker the fabric color, the more UV protection clothing offers.
- **Generously apply a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen** with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 30 or higher to all exposed skin. "Broad spectrum" provides protection from both UVA and UVB rays.
- Apply sunscreen 15 minutes before going outside so it has time to take effect.
- Reapply approximately every two hours, even on cloudy days, and after swimming or sweating.

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To find a free SPOTme® skin cancer screening in your area, visit SpotSkinCancer.org or call 888-462-DERM (3376)

- **Use extra caution near water, snow, and sand** because they reflect and intensify the damaging rays of the sun, which can increase the chance of sunburn.
 - Winter and alpine athletes receive even more sun exposure, not only due to the reflection off the snow and ice, but because they are at a higher altitude.

It's important to remember that anyone can get skin cancer, regardless of skin color. It is estimated that one in five Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime. When caught early, skin cancer is highly treatable.

Visit SpotSkinCancer.org to learn how to do a skin cancer self-exam and download the AAD's body mole map to document any suspicious spots.

If you notice a new spot or an existing spot that changes, itches or bleeds, make an appointment to see a board-certified dermatologist.

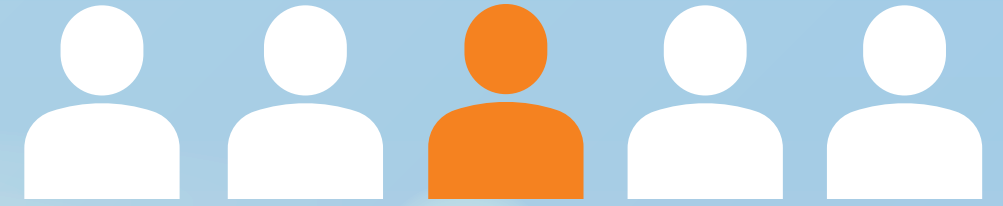
Continue reading below for sun protection facts and how to choose a sunblock.



SAY YES TO SUN PROTECTION SAY NO TO SKIN CANCER

SKIN CANCER IS THE MOST COMMON CANCER IN THE U.S.

ONE in **FIVE** Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime, and one person dies from melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, every hour.



THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF SUNSCREENS:

Since exposure to the sun's harmful UV rays is the most preventable risk factor for skin cancer, protect your skin by:



- **SEEKING SHADE**
- **WEARING PROTECTIVE CLOTHING**
- **GENEROUSLY APPLYING SUNSCREEN**



PHYSICAL SUNSCREEN

This sunscreen **WORKS LIKE A SHIELD**; it sits on the surface of your skin, deflecting the sun's rays.

Look for the active ingredients **ZINC OXIDE** and/or **TITANIUM DIOXIDE**.

Opt for this sunscreen if you have **SENSITIVE SKIN**.



CHEMICAL SUNSCREEN

This sunscreen **WORKS AS A SPONGE**, absorbing the sun's rays.

Look for one or more of the following active ingredients: **OXYBENZONE**, **AVOBENZONE**, **OCTISALATE**, **OCTOCRYLENE**, **HOMOSALATE** and **OCTINOXATE**.

This formulation tends to be **EASIER TO RUB INTO** the skin without leaving a white residue.

THE U.S. FOOD & DRUG ADMINISTRATION HAS APPROVED THE ACTIVE INGREDIENTS IN THESE SUNSCREENS AS SAFE AND EFFECTIVE.



If you have concerns about certain sunscreen ingredients, use the information above to choose an alternative that works for you. As long as it's **BROAD-SPECTRUM**, **WATER-RESISTANT** and has an **SPF 30 OR HIGHER**, it can effectively protect you from the sun. Make sure you reapply it every **TWO HOURS** when outdoors, or after swimming or sweating.



If you have questions about how to protect your skin or choose a sunscreen, talk to a board-certified dermatologist or learn more at [SpotSkinCancer.org](https://www.spotskin.org).

HOW TO SELECT A SUNSCREEN

Choosing the right sunscreen can help reduce the risk of skin cancer and early skin aging caused by the sun.

SUNSCREEN IS AN IMPORTANT TOOL

in the fight against skin cancer, including melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer.

1 in 5

Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime.



The American Academy of Dermatology recommends consumers choose a sunscreen that states on the label:

BROAD SPECTRUM

Means a sunscreen protects the skin from ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) rays, both of which can cause cancer.

SPF 30 OR HIGHER

How well a sunscreen protects you from sunburn.

WATER RESISTANT OR VERY WATER RESISTANT

For up to 40 or 80 minutes. Sunscreens are not waterproof or sweatproof and need to be reapplied.



ONE OUNCE OF SUNSCREEN, enough to fill a shot glass, is considered the amount needed to cover the exposed areas of the body.



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