



TREATING A SUNBURN

If not fully protected from the sun, your top layer of skin can be damaged or "burned". Symptoms of sunburn are dry, red skin which is often painful. A sunburn will usually heal in 3-7 days with no scarring.

Some suggestions for treatment include the following:

- A physician should be consulted for children less than 1 year of age or if blistering, shivering, fever or headache is present.
- A burn may be cooled down by soaking in a cool bath or by using cool compresses.
- Nonprescription pain relievers (acetaminophen or ibuprofen) can be used for relief of minor pain.
- Aloe vera gel can be used as a moisturizer and protectant. However, products containing alcohol should be avoided; they can further sensitize the skin.
- As skin heals, it may often peel and become very itchy. Moisturizers can be applied to relieve itching and dryness. Nonprescription hydrocortisone cream or oral diphenhydramine may also be helpful. Your PROfile pharmacist can help you in choosing an appropriate product.



WHERE TO FIND MORE INFORMATION

Canadian Cancer Society

National Office
Suite 200, 10 Alcorn Avenue
Toronto, Ontario M4V 3B1
Phone: 1-416-961-7223
www.cancer.ca

Canadian Dermatology Association

1385 Bank Street, Suite 425
Ottawa, Ontario K1H 8N4
Phone: 1-800-267-3376
www.dermatology.ca

Health Canada, It's Your Health

12th Floor, Room 1264D, Brooke Claxton Building
Tunney's Pasture, Postal Locator: 0912D
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1K9
Phone: 1-866-225-0709
www.hc-sc.gc.ca

The information found in this PROfile health brochure is of a general nature only. It is not intended to replace the advice of your pharmacist, physician, or other healthcare provider. If you have questions relating to your specific health concerns, please contact your personal healthcare provider.



Sun Care

Your PROfile Pharmacist
has many resources to assist you
in managing your skin condition
and is always pleased to discuss
your health concerns!

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WHY DO WE NEED PROTECTION FROM THE SUN?

As the Earth's ozone layer thins, we are exposed to more of the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays. There are three different types of UV rays-A, B, and C. UVC rays are trapped by the ozone layer; however, UVA and UVB rays reach Earth and are responsible for causing skin cancers, premature skin aging, and cataracts. By taking appropriate steps to decrease UV radiation exposure, these conditions can be prevented.

AVOIDING UV RADIATION

There are several ways to avoid exposure to UV radiation. Below are some suggestions to decrease your exposure.

- Avoid being out in the sun when the sun's UV rays are strongest-between 10 am and 4 pm.
- Seek shaded areas as much as possible to avoid direct UV radiation.
- Avoid artificial tanning beds as they also emit harmful UV rays.
- When out in the sun, wear as much protective clothing as possible. This would include broad-brimmed sun hats, long-sleeved shirts, long pants and sunglasses.
- Use a sunscreen with a minimum SPF (Sun Protection Factor) of 15. Make sure the label says it offers both UVA and UVB protection.
- Take all the necessary precautions to avoid exposure even on cloudy days. The sun's UV rays can penetrate through clouds.
- Certain medications can increase your sensitivity to the sun and you should take special care to avoid the sun's UV rays if you take them. Some examples include sulfa medications, amiodarone, quinolones, tetracyclines, and certain antidepressants. Your PROfile pharmacist can help determine if any of your medications are sun-sensitizing.

WHAT IS SUN PROTECTION FACTOR (SPF)?

Sun Protection Factor (SPF) compares the amount of time it takes to burn from UVB rays with and without protection. For example, if you burn in 10 minutes without protection, it would take you 150 minutes (10×15) to burn wearing a sunscreen with SPF 15.

A product with SPF 15 blocks 93% of UVB rays; however, SPF 30 will only block another 4% of UVB rays (for a total of 97%).

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A SUNSCREEN

Sunscreens consist of ingredients that absorb or reflect the sun's rays away from your skin. It is important to choose a product with both UVA and UVB protection. Examples of ingredients to look for are light blockers such as titanium dioxide or zinc oxide as they reflect both UVA and UVB rays.

Also, look for products which have "broad spectrum" and the Canadian Dermatology Association's (CDA) logo in their labelling. Products with the CDA logo have been tested for safety and effectiveness.

Choose a sunscreen with a SPF of at least 15. Individuals with fair skin may want to use a sunscreen with a SPF of 30.

If swimming or participating in water sports, choose a product labelled as water-resistant or waterproof. Water-resistant products maintain the same SPF protection for 40 minutes when in contact with water, whereas waterproof products maintain SPF protection for 80 minutes. Re-apply sunscreen after swimming or towelling off.

SUNSCREEN TIPS

- Sunscreen should be applied liberally to the skin. An adult should use at least 3 ml for the face and neck (avoiding the eyes), 3ml for each arm and shoulder, 5 ml for each leg, 5ml for chest and stomach, and 5 ml for the back. A typical bottle of sunscreen should cover the entire body surface of an adult about four times.
- Sunscreen starts to work immediately once it is applied; however, it should be applied approximately 30 minutes before sun exposure.
- While in the sun, apply sunscreen every 2 hours and even more frequently after swimming or sweating.
- Wear a lip balm with SPF 15. Lips are prone to damage and blistering if not protected.
- Avoid sunscreens in infants less than 6 months of age. Instead, keep infants out of direct sunlight and use hats and clothing to cover baby's skin.
- Never use sunscreen to extend your stay in the sun. Even if the skin is not burned, damage to the skin can still occur. Use sunscreen in addition to other methods of sun protection (clothing, shade).

