

BETter Living ...

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Are You Soaking Up Too Much Sun?

Have you heard of the Slip, Slop, Slap, Wrap slogan? It is reminding you about sun safety. Now is the time of the year, where we all get out and soak up the sun. Too much sun can be harmful.

There are many factors that funnel into how much the sun will impact our skin and body.

Slip on a Shirt

This means that you will want to wear clothing to cover your skin. Any skin that is exposed is at risk for sun damage. The darker the color the more protection it provides against UV rays. If the fabric allows light through, then UV rays also can get through.

Slop on Sunscreen

Sunscreen is a filter, but does not block all UV rays. The first options should be to slip on clothing or stay in the shade. It is very important to put enough sunscreen on and to remember that you must reapply it about every two hours. One ounce (a palm full) of sunscreen should be used to cover your arms, legs, neck, and face. Some spots that people forget include: ears, back of neck, hands, tops of feet, along the hairline, balding or thinning spots on the head. Remember there is no such thing as water-proof sunscreen. Lastly, always check the expiration date. If it is outdated, discard and buy some new.

Slap on a Hat

Wear a hat that has at least a 2-3 inch brim all around, so it can protect your ears, eyes, forehead, nose, and scalp. A hat with a dark, non-reflective underside will help reduce the amount of UV rays that reach your face. A shade cap is a great option as it has fabric that drapes down on the sides and back. You can make your own by wearing a handkerchief under a baseball cap.

Wrap on Sunglasses

It is very important to protect your eyes. Select sunglasses that block UVA and UVB rays. Look for labels that says "Meets ANSI UV requirements or UV absorption up to 400 nm". The cosmetic ones block about 70% of UV rays. Wraparound sunglasses protect your eyes from multiple angles.

We all love to get outdoors and soak up the sun, so remember Slip, Slop, Slap, Wrap and you will help reduce your chance of sun damage.

For more information, visit: cancer.org, cdc.gov or call 785-765-3821 or email: btrieb@ksu.edu.