



Reduce Ultraviolet Ray Exposure

- Limit your time in the sun between 10 AM and 4 PM, when the sun's rays are the strongest.
- Stay in the shade when possible.
- Avoid tanning beds as they substantially increase skin cancer risk.
- Remember that even on cloudy days, 80% of the ultraviolet rays get through the clouds.

How to Protect Your Skin:

- Use sunscreen and lip protection.
- Limit sun exposure.
- Seek shade.
- Wear sunglasses.
- Wear protective clothing.
- Wear a wide brimmed hat.
- Protect windows.
- Perform self-skin examinations.

Ultraviolet Rays

Ultraviolet (UV) rays are part of our atmosphere and can damage the DNA of our skin. Two types of UV rays are:

UVA: creates the tanned look, causes eye damage, premature skin wrinkling, aging, and skin cancer.

UVB: causes sunburn or skin redness, premature skin aging, and skin cancer.

Skin damage from UV rays is cumulative over your lifetime. Unless you take steps to protect yourself, it will only get worse. You cannot reverse skin damage. Up to 80% of visible skin changes attributed to aging are caused by the sun.

Always check the UV index for your zip code before heading outside.



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OSU Extension – Warren County
Laura Stanton, FCS Extension Educator
320 East Silver Street
Lebanon, OH 45036
513-695-1311
email: stanton.60@osu.edu

Visit us online at: warren.osu.edu

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Protect Your Skin



Laura Stanton

Extension Educator, Warren County

Family and Consumer Sciences



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Use Sunscreen and Lip Protection



- Use sunscreen daily. Sunscreens are rated with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF).
- Use 30 SPF or higher, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen.

- Use a generous amount and rub it into your skin, even if it is a spray.
- Sunscreen should be applied 20 to 30 minutes before going out in the sun.
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours or sooner when sweating or swimming.
- Use lip protection that provides 30 SPF or higher protection from UVA and UVB rays.
- Do not apply sunscreen to babies 6 months or less. Keep the little ones in the shade, indoors, or covered up.

Perform Self-Skin Exams

Check your body for skin cancer and changes on your moles monthly. People who have had skin cancer are likely to have additional occurrences within five years. Become familiar with the moles and spots on your body. If you see changes, have them checked by a medical professional.

Wear Sunglasses and UV Protective Clothing

Wearing clothing provides some protection. Loosely fitted clothing allows more air circulation and is more comfortable. Long sleeve tops and pants or long skirts provide the most protection.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) rates some fabrics using an Ultra Protective Factor (UPF). The higher the rating, the better the protection. A 50 UPF is similar to applying sunscreen with a 30 SPF. These fabrics are generally more expensive, but lightweight. You can find this kind of clothing in sports stores, outdoor specialty stores, mail catalogs, and online.



Use sunglasses that provide 99 – 100% UVA and UVB protection.

Don't forget: Children need protection, too.

Although dark colors absorb heat and are less comfortable to wear, they do provide better protection. A white, knit t-shirt has a rating of 5 UPF (3 when wet), whereas navy or black t-shirts rate at 20-25 UPF. Choose a medium color, such as red, green, medium blue or purple fabric for protection and comfort. Closely woven or knitted fabric provides more protection than open weave fabric.



Wear a Wide Brimmed Hat

Wide brimmed hats provide UV protection for your head, ears, face, and neck. These areas are common locations where many skin cancer cells appear. Hats should:

- Have a 3" or wider brim.
- Shade the face, temples, ears, and neck.
- Be constructed of tightly woven fabric that blocks ultraviolet rays.

Avoid straw hats and baseball caps. Straw hats do not provide adequate protection unless they are lined in the brim and crown with ultraviolet safe fabric. Baseball caps do not provide protection to the ears, temples, or neck.