

# SUN SAFETY FACT SHEET

The prevention and early detection of skin cancer

For further advice and information visit: [skcin.org](http://skcin.org)



## SKIN CANCER THE FACTS

**REMEMBER**  
A MASSIVE 80-90% OF ALL SKIN CANCER CASES IN THE UK ARE PREVENTABLE WITH SUN SAFE MEASURES

ALMOST ALL SKIN CANCERS ARE CAUSED BY OVER-EXPOSURE TO ULTRAVIOLET RADIATION (UVR) FROM THE SUN AND/OR SUNBEDS. ALL SKIN TYPES CAN BE DAMAGED BY EXPOSURE TO UVR. DAMAGE IS PERMANENT, IRREVERSIBLE AND INCREASES WITH EACH EXPOSURE.

- Skin cancer is the UK's most common cancer
- Malignant melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer is one of the most common cancers in young adults (aged 15-34) in the UK
- Over the last twenty-five years, rates of malignant melanoma in Britain have risen faster than any other common cancer
- More people die from skin cancer in the UK than Australia
- **Over 80% of all skin cancers are caused by over-exposure to the sun and/or sunbeds, making the majority of all skin cancers preventable!**



## FIVE S's OF SUN SAFETY

**WARNING**  
ALL SKIN TYPES CAN BE DAMAGED BY UV BUT THOSE WITH FAIRER SKIN NEED TO TAKE EXTRA CARE

SKCIN RECOMMEND FIVE SIMPLE STEPS TO SUN SAFETY:- SLIP, SLOP, SLAP, SLIDE, SHADE

Remember it's not just sunbathing that puts you at risk, but being in the sun without adequate protection. If you regularly take part in outdoor hobbies or sports, or work outdoors you could be at greater risk. Make sure you use all of the 5 S's of sun safety and NEVER BURN!

1. SLIP on sun t-shirt
2. SLOP on SPF 30+ broad spectrum UVA sunscreen
3. SLAP on a broad brimmed hat
4. SLIDE on quality sunglasses
5. SHADE from the sun whenever possible

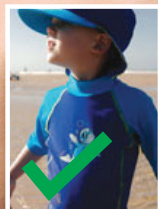


## CHILDREN & BABIES

**WARNING**  
CHILDREN CAN STILL BURN ON OVERCAST DAYS! NO CHILD SHOULD GET SUNBURNED - EVER!

ONE BLISTERING SUNBURN IN CHILDHOOD OR ADOLESCENCE MORE THAN DOUBLES A PERSON'S CHANCE OF DEVELOPING MELANOMA IN LATER LIFE. THE DAMAGE IS IRREPARABLE.

- Use a minimum SPF of 30+ (preferably SPF 50) sunscreen
- Ensure it is broad spectrum, ideally UVA rating 4 star plus
- Apply liberally, ensuring good coverage
- Don't forget shoulders, ears, nose, cheeks & feet
- Apply 20 minutes before children go outdoors
- Reapply at least every 2 hours
- Use a water resistant sunscreen on children over 3
- Reapply immediately after swimming / towelling
- Water resistant sunscreens should not be used on children under 3 years as they can overheat
- Keep toddlers and babies in the shade as much as possible, particularly when abroad
- Always keep shoulders covered!
- Use UV protective sun suits & broad-brimmed or legionnaire hats for added protection
- Don't forget school - lunch breaks are taken when UV penetration is strongest



## CHECKING YOUR SKIN

**WARNING**  
IT IS IMPORTANT TO REGULARLY CHECK YOUR SKIN FOR SIGNS OF CHANGES TO DETECT CANCER EARLY!

THE SOONER A SKIN CANCER IS IDENTIFIED AND TREATED, THE BETTER YOUR CHANCE OF AVOIDING SURGERY OR, IN THE CASE OF A SERIOUS MELANOMA OR OTHER SKIN CANCER, POTENTIAL DISFIGUREMENT OR EVEN DEATH.

Check your skin regularly for signs of change and consult your doctor immediately with any concerns. To help you know how to detect a potential melanoma remember the ABCDE of melanoma rule:

- A = **ASYMMETRY**: when one half of the mole doesn't match the other
- B = **BORDER**: when the borders are irregular, ragged or blurred
- C = **COLOUR**: when the colour changes or varies throughout and /or there appears to be no uniform pigmentation
- D = **DIAMETER**: greater than 6mm (but could be smaller)
- E = **EVOLVING**: changes in the mole over time (weeks, months, years)

If an existing or new mole is getting bigger or growing quickly, starts to itch, gets painful, starts bleeding, gets crusty or inflamed, consult your doctor immediately.