

The Truth about Sun & Sunscreens by Ferguson Family Chiropractic

I normally advise against using most commercial sunscreens. Read on to find out why!!

Natural sunlight's potential to harm you has really been blown out of proportion. This is thanks to many doctors, health officials, advertisements, beauty experts, corporations, and well-meaning friends. They basically tell you that you need to stay out of the sun because the sun will kill you. This simply isn't true. For starters, there is little scientific evidence to justify the many health campaigns that urge you to completely avoid the sun. Avoiding the sun just doesn't make sense. And it certainly doesn't make any sense when study after study shows that **the Sun is Not Deadly!**

In fact, the **sun is healthy** for you. After all, your ancestors survived outdoors, working outside under the sun's rays far more often than they were indoors and out of the sun. So how on earth would it be possible for your body to end up being configured in such a way that the sun is now a deadly threat to you, me, and the entire human race? It simply isn't true.

That's not to say sunlight can't be harmful. Of course, it can be... For instance, long-term, excessive exposure to sunlight can increase the risk of certain types of skin cancer. Yet **moderate** sun exposure is **less dangerous** than sporadic sun exposure. Plus, there's a good deal of evidence that **sun exposure without sunburn** significantly **decreases** the risk of melanoma (a more deadly form of skin cancer.) So...safe sun exposure is key.

What You Should Know About UVA and UVB Rays... Ultraviolet light from the sun comes in two main wavelengths -- UVA and UVB. It's important for you to understand the difference between them, and your risk factors from each. Consider **UVB** the 'good guy' -- though of course you can't de-select UVA if you're going to be in the sun. UVB helps your skin produce **vitamin D**. **UVA** is considered the 'bad guy' because it penetrates your skin more deeply and causes more free radical damage...a precursor to cell damage and cancer. Not only that, but UVA rays are quite constant during all the hours of daylight throughout the entire year.

By comparison, UVB waves are low in morning and evening and high at midday. So, if you're out early in the morning or late in the day, you get lots of UVA (bad guy) and not much UVB (good guy). Not a good way to produce vitamin D. Plus you increase your risk of cancer if that's your only sun intake, and you fail to protect your skin. You can even get a sunburn on a cloudy day because the UVA rays can break through cloud cover and pollution and do some real damage your skin.

How Sunscreens Keep You from Enjoying the Many Benefits of the Sun's Healthy Rays...As you may know, wearing a sunscreen on your uncovered skin blocks your body's production of vitamin D. In fact, sunscreens reduce vitamin D production by as much as 97.5 to 99.9% that may have dire health consequences. After all, vitamin D plays a crucial role in your overall health and well-being. For example, this superb vitamin is known to: **Support your cardiovascular health**, Promote optimal cholesterol levels, **Enhance your muscle strength**, Help produce optimal blood pressure levels, **Help maintain a healthy immune system**, Support healthy kidney function, **Promote healthy teeth**, Help keep your bones strong and healthy...so **Natural Sunlight is Far and Away the Best Way to Get Your Vitamin D!** Your body is the best pharmacy out there...As soon as the sun's ultraviolet rays strike your skin, your body is programmed to do something remarkable. It starts producing its own natural vitamin D - the most active form in existence - calciferol - vitamin D3. Vitamin D3 is actually the *precise* form your body needs for the proper functioning of your organs and cells. Our bodies automatically generate enough of it with virtually no risk of overdose. They just know when to stop producing natural vitamin D before it can reach toxic levels. However, elevated vitamin D levels obtained strictly from oral supplements can take six months or longer to normalize. That's why I cautiously recommend supplementing your vitamin D

with pills. If you do take vitamin D supplements, you need to get your blood levels tested regularly to avoid toxicity.

With natural sunlight, you may be wondering what precautions you need to take...and it's time to expose the sunscreen smokescreen! In my opinion, corporate greed has created hundreds of products that are harmful and toxic because they contain man-made chemicals ... chemicals I believe can cause serious health problems and increase your risk of disease. Here's why.

The main chemical used in sunscreens to filter out ultraviolet B light is octyl methoxycinnamate. **OMC** for short. OMC was found to kill mouse cells even at low doses. Plus, it was also shown to be particularly toxic when exposed to sunshine. Hello, it gets worn in the sun!! And guess what? **OMC is present in 90 percent of sunscreen brands!** But that's not the half of it. A common UVA filter, butyl methoxydibenzoylmethane, has also demonstrated toxic properties. Furthermore, studies show that the chemicals commonly used in sunscreens are absorbed through the skin and end up circulating in your blood stream and can cause kidney and liver changes/lesions and initiate tumors.

So...if your sunscreen contains any of these chemicals that I consider dangerous and potentially life threatening, do yourself a BIG favor...dump it in the trash now: Para amino benzoic acid, Octyl-salicyclate, Avobenzone, Oxybenzone, Cinoxate, Padimate O, Dioxybenzone, Phenylbenzimidazole, Homosalate, Sulisobenzene, Menthyl anthranilate, Trolamine salicyclate, Octocrylene. Dioxybenzone and oxybenzone are some of the most powerful free radical generators known to man and can cause skin cancer! (*Toxic Rep Ser 1992;21:1-14, J Chrom B Anal Biomed 2004; 803: 225-31*). I recommend you switch to a safer, more natural sunscreen that is healthy for your skin.

And a note to moms ... You are undoubtedly very conscientious about caring for your children. But when you lather up your son or daughter with sunscreen thinking you're doing the right thing, you could in fact be doing more harm than good. So check the labels on your sunscreen, and throw them out if they contain any of the potentially dangerous chemicals named above. After all, your skin is your largest organ, as your child's skin is theirs.

Look for more **natural sunscreens** with the following skin-protective ingredients: **Titanium Dioxide & Zinc Oxide**-natural minerals that remain on your skin to reflect and scatter away both UVA and UVB rays from your body. Other healthy ingredients in more natural sunscreens include: **Green tea** is a powerful antioxidant, reduces the appearance of skin damage. **Sunflower oil**- contains vitamins A, D and E, moisturizes dry, weathered, and aged skin. **Coconut oil** moisturizes while attaining a glowing, dark tan; if you have skin sensitivities, it is likely to be more mild and gentle. **Glycerine** improves skin's natural moisture by attracting just the right amount of water to maintain your skin's homeostasis. **Jojoba oil**- non-fragrant natural emollient for superior moisturizing and skin conditioning properties. **Tocopheryl acetate (vitamin E)** acts as a natural preservative. **Shea butter**- natural plant lipid used as both a thickener and an emulsifier; has effective moisturizing properties. **Eucalyptus oil**- an essential oil. And when it's mixed with other oils, it is more easily absorbed by your skin. Best of all, it assists other oils to be absorbed in your skin as well. This obviously supports the moisturizing process. As with all safe sunscreen lotions, I recommend you re-apply frequently, especially after swimming, perspiring, or towel-drying.

There are many simple lifestyle changes you can make to radically decrease your risk of sunburn, such as choosing your essential fatty acids wisely like omega-3 fish oil (available at our office), consuming raw vegetables loaded with skin protecting antioxidant phytonutrients (cancer and free-radical fighters), avoiding processed foods and sugars that lack nutrients are loaded with denatured fatty acids, protecting exposed skin with a hat/clothing and opting for more natural sunscreens.

Call today to set up a complimentary consultation to discuss your health concerns 383.5595
Dr. John M. Ferguson ~ Exit 9, The Crossings - Clifton Park ~ www.ForLifetimeWellness.com