

SUN SAFETY

What You Can Do!

"Sun exposure during childhood (up to 18 years old) is estimated to account for almost 80% of one's lifetime sun exposure, so children have the greatest potential to benefit from sun protection."

CDC's National Skin Cancer Prevention Education Program

"95% of skin cancers result from ultraviolet radiation, and sun exposure during childhood, has been linked to higher skin cancer rates in adulthood."

Hoffmann, Rodrigue & Johnson, 1999.

WEAR PROTECTIVE CLOTHING:

- **Hats:** Select a hat that protects your face, ears, and neck from the sun. A baseball cap is probably not the best choice! Choose from wide-brimmed hats, pith helmets, or hats with removable flaps.

Ask yourself these questions when choosing a hat:

1. Is the hat cool enough to wear on a summer day?
 2. Is the hat comfortable?
 3. And most importantly, will you wear it?
- **Clothing:** Long-sleeved shirts and pants may seem somewhat uncomfortable in the summer, but proper clothing can protect against the sun's rays and decrease heat stress. Lightweight cotton fabrics that are light colored are the best choice.
 - **Sunglasses:** Choose a pair of sunglasses with a high UV rating (the percentage of ultraviolet rays blocked by the sunglasses.) The best UV rating is 100! If information is not provided by the manufacturer, the glasses may not offer any protection.

SUNSCREEN:

- Sunscreens can not take the place of protective clothing and should be used together for the best protection.
- Choose a sunscreen with at least a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 15 or more. This means you are protected from a reaction to the sun's rays 15 times longer than without the sunscreen. **READ THE LABEL** to know when to reapply and if the sunscreen is waterproof.

Take a stand for children. We are!



Avoid the Sun!

- Try and avoid the sun between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. This is when the sun's ultraviolet rays are the strongest.
- Know the ways of the rays! You can burn on a cloudy day just as easily as on a sunny day.
- Just because you are in the water does not mean that you can not get burned. The sun's rays can penetrate through three feet of water.
- The sun will also reflect off the water and the sand. A beach umbrella is great but may not provide you with all the protection you may need.
- Take the kids to the park, beach or outside to play in the early morning or later afternoon hours to avoid the 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. rule.
- Do not use sun lamps, tanning parlors, or tanning pills! These things can be just as harmful as the sun.

Who is At Risk?

- Children! A blistering sunburn before the age of ten will double the likelihood of that child developing skin cancer sometime during their lifetime. The American Cancer Society suggests the following guidelines to protect children from the sun:
 - S- *Shadow test.* If the shadow is shorter than the child, the sun is at its strongest and most dangerous point.
 - U- *Ultraviolet* sun block with an SPF of 15 or greater should always be used if the child is exposed to sun.
 - N- *Now!* Protect children from the harmful effects of the sun now.
- People with fair skin. The fairer or lighter the skin, the greater your risk. Also, those who are sensitive to the sun (who burn easily and do not tan easily) are at a greater risk.
- People with dark brown and black skin are at risk as well, especially on the palms of the hands, soles of the feet and under the nails.

The strongest weapon we have to protect our children from skin cancer is prevention!

*For more information about injury prevention and other programs through St. Joseph's Children's Advocacy Center, please call (813) 615-0589
1401A East Fowler Avenue, Tampa, FL 33612*



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