

ARE YOU GETTING THE MOST FROM SUNSCREEN?



Although the best choices for sun protection are to stay in the shade and to cover up, sunscreen is helpful too. Here is a checklist for effective sunscreen use.

- ☼ **Choose a sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher that gives protection from both UVA & UVB rays.** Look for a product with the Canadian Dermatology Association logo on it. If you are going to be outside for longer than 2 ½ hours, a SPF of 30 or higher might be a better choice. (Note: Sunscreens are not recommended for infants under six months of age.)
- ☼ **Read and follow the manufacturer's recommendations on the bottle or tube.** Check for the expiry date of the product. Do not use after expiration date.
- ☼ **Sunscreen should be applied 30 minutes before sun exposure. Apply a second time 20 minutes later.** This is important. It allows time for the active ingredients in the sunscreen to reach the protection level.
- ☼ **Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours or after swimming, towelling or exercising.** This includes waterproof sunscreen.
- ☼ **Apply sunscreen generously to dry clean skin.** Sunscreen must be applied to dry clean skin generously and thoroughly to be effective. Don't forget ears, nose, back of neck and backs of legs. Also use an SPF 15 sunscreen lip balm for lips.
- ☼ **Use a sunscreen even on cloudy, hazy, foggy and cool days.**
- ☼ **Always test for an allergic reaction when first using a sunscreen.** Apply a small amount on your inner forearm for 2 – 3 days consecutively. Check for adverse reactions.

Application of insect repellent may reduce the effectiveness of sunscreen. When sunscreen and insect repellent are used together, cover up and wear a hat to ensure better protection from the sun. Use insect repellent as directed by the manufacturer.

Remember, no sunscreen protects 100%. So apply sunscreen and then cover up with a hat, long-sleeve shirt, pants and sunglasses.

For more information call Toronto Health Connection 416-338-7600