

MCLB ALBANY SAFETYGRAM



Protection From The Sun's UV Rays

Facts About Sun Exposure

The sun radiates light to the earth, and part of that light consists of invisible ultraviolet (UV) rays. When these rays reach the skin, they cause tanning, burning, and other skin damage.

Sunlight contains three types of ultraviolet rays: UVA, UVB, and UVC.

1. **UVA** rays cause skin aging and wrinkling and contribute to skin cancer, such as melanoma. Because UVA rays pass effortlessly through the ozone layer (the protective layer of atmosphere, or shield, surrounding the earth), they make up the majority of our sun exposure. Beware of tanning beds because they use UVA rays as well as UVB rays. A UVA tan does **not** help protect the skin from further sun damage; it merely produces color and a false sense of protection from the sun.
2. **UVB** rays are also dangerous, causing sunburns, cataracts (clouding of the eye lens), and effects on the immune system. They also contribute to skin cancer. Melanoma, the most dangerous form of skin cancer, is thought to be associated with severe UVB sunburns that occur before the age of 20. Most UVB rays are absorbed by the ozone layer, but enough of these rays pass through to cause serious damage.
3. **UVC** rays are the most dangerous, but fortunately, these rays are blocked by the ozone layer and don't reach the earth.

UV Level Protection Measures

Exposure Category	Index Number	Sun Protection Messages
LOW	<2	You can safely enjoy being outside. Wear sunglasses on bright days. If you burn easily, cover up and use sunscreen SPF 30+ . In winter, reflection off snow can nearly double UV strength.
MODERATE	3-5	Take precautions if you will be outside, such as wearing a hat and sunglasses and using sunscreen SPF 30+ . Reduce your exposure to the sun's most intense UV radiation by seeking shade during midday hours.
HIGH	6-7	Protection against sun damage is needed. Wear a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses, use sunscreen SPF 30+ and wear a long-sleeved shirt and pants when practical. Reduce your exposure to the sun's most intense UV radiation by seeking shade during midday hours.
VERY HIGH	8-10	Protection against sun damage is needed. If you need to be outside during midday hours between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., take steps to reduce sun exposure. A shirt, hat and sunscreen are a must, and be sure you seek shade. Beachgoers should know that white sand and other bright surfaces reflect UV and can double UV exposure.
EXTREME	11+	Protection against sun damage is needed. If you need to be outside during midday hours between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., take steps to reduce sun exposure. A shirt, hat and sunscreen are a must, and be sure you seek shade. Beachgoers should know that white sand and other bright surfaces reflect UV and can double UV exposure.

SPF: Sun Protection Factor

Check the UV Index before you spend the day in the sun.

Click on the icon to check the UV Index in your area.



UV
INDEX
9

Low (<2)
Moderate (3 to 5)
High (6 to 7)
Very High (8 to 10)
Extreme (11+)



Risk Management 639-5249
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Jun 13

