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SUN PROTECTION

Optimum sun protection involves a combination of sun “sense”, protective clothing, and sunscreen. Sun exposure damages the skin, and over time results in increased numbers of freckles, moles, wrinkles, and skin cancers. Blistering sunburns increase the risk of developing melanoma, the most severe type of skin cancer. The incidence of skin cancer is on the rise, even in children!

Sun “Sense”

- *Avoid the sun between 11am and 3 pm when it is the strongest.
- *Remember that sun reflects off of water, sand, and snow, increasing its effects.
- *Plan ahead for your activity or trip- take sun protection with you.
- *Apply sunscreen 20-30 minutes before going outside.
- *Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours, or sooner if swimming or perspiring.

Sun Protective Clothing

*Protective clothing (hats, long-sleeved shirts, pants) should be used in addition to sunscreen. Most clothing has an SPF of 5-9, but clothing made from lightweight tightly-woven fabrics with an SPF of 30-50+ is available from several companies (*Solumbra, Sunsafe, UV Aquawear, C-Wear*). Some of these companies make clothing for children, especially swimsuits.

**Don’t forget sunglasses- our eyes need sun protection too!

Sunscreens

*Pick a broad-spectrum sunscreen that covers both UVA and UVB rays. These usually have an SPF of 15 or higher. Ones with the best broad-spectrum protection contain **TITANIUM DIOXIDE, ZINC OXIDE, or AVOBENZONE/PARSOL**. The SPF numbering system will be changing soon, and sunscreens will be labeled Low, Medium, and High protection. High means good UVA/UVB coverage. Read the labels!!

*Sunscreens come in a variety of forms: creams, lotions, gels, sprays, foams, and sticks. You should pick the one that will work best for you and your child. Sticks and other waterproof varieties tend to stay on longer when swimming or sweating (*Neutrogena for Faces* is an oil-free stick containing Parsol).

*Baby sunscreens are usually safe for sensitive skin, but may not provide broad-spectrum coverage. They are labeled for use in babies 6 months of age or older. Sunscreens with the physical blockers, titanium dioxide or zinc oxide, may be used in babies under 6

months of age, but protective clothing and good sun “sense” should be the first line of sun protection for babies.

*Non-comedogenic or oil-free sunscreens should be used if you have acne.

*Don't forget lip protection, especially if you are taking photosensitive medicines such as Tetracycline, Doxycycline, or Accutane.