



## TVC's Family Guide: *Sun-Safe Outdoor Fun*

Every day - whether it is sunny or cloudy, and despite the season - we are exposed to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun. Even though UV rays are slightly less powerful during the fall and winter months, prolonged exposure contributes to long term detrimental effects to the eyes. No matter the time of year, it's important to wear sunglasses and to protect the skin to prevent short-term and long-term damage.

Location matters, too. Water, snow and sand reflect the damaging rays of the sun,<sup>1</sup> which can increase your chance of sunburn or eye damage.

## PROTECT YOUR EYES

### Shield Against Ultraviolet A (UVA) and Ultraviolet B (UVB) Rays

Both types of UV rays can damage the eyes, so be sure to wear sunglasses that filter both.

### Buy Sunglasses from a Reputable Retailer

Sunglasses sold by a reputable retailer will meet frame and lens safety criteria set by the American National Standards Institute.

### Feel Good in Your Shades

Sunglasses that aren't comfortable are less likely to get worn.

### Find Sunglasses for all of Your Activities

Different lenses and frames are suited to various types of sports and other activities. Consider some of the specialized sports equipment now available, such as swim or ski goggles with UV protection.

### Color Your World

Select a lens color that improves clarity and reduces glare – yellow- and brown-tinted lenses are best when you're on the water; gray, brown and amber are great for field sports; and mirror coatings work well for downhill skiing and snowboarding.

### Pick a Design that Works

Wraparound glasses or glasses with larger temple pieces help block the sun from side angles.

## PROTECT YOUR SKIN<sup>2</sup>

### Do Not Burn

Sunburns significantly increase one's lifetime risk of developing skin cancer, especially for children.

### Avoid Sun Tanning and Tanning Beds

UV light from tanning beds and the sun causes skin cancer and wrinkling.

### Generously Apply Sunscreen

Apply about one ounce of sunscreen to cover all exposed skin 20 minutes before going outside. Sunscreen should have a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 15 and provide protection from both UVA and UVB rays. Reapply every two hours, even on cloudy days, and after swimming or sweating.

### Wear Protective Clothing

Wear protective clothing, such as a long-sleeved shirt, pants, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunglasses, when possible.

### Seek Shade

Seek shade when possible and remember that the sun's UV rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

### Get Vitamin D Safely

Get vitamin D safely through a diet that includes vitamin supplements and fortified foods. Don't seek the sun.



## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHILDREN

Medical research shows that it is important to protect children and young adults from overexposure to UV radiation. Children receive three times the annual sun exposure of adults,<sup>3</sup> and research has shown that their young eyes are especially susceptible to UV-related harm.

For babies under 6 months, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends avoiding sun exposure and dressing infants in lightweight long pants, long-sleeved shirts and brimmed hats. Parents can also supply sunscreen (SPF 15+) to small areas like the face and back of the hands if protective clothing and shade are not available.

### PROTECTING A CHILD'S DELICATE EYES

A 2008 survey found that less than a third of U.S. adults made their children wear sunglasses outdoors, compared to more than 80 percent who insisted on sunscreen. Because children's eyes are particularly vulnerable to UV, parents should ensure that their kids wear sunglasses \*(and should lead by example). The glasses should be comfortable and fit a child's face.

\*VSP. Sunglasses are Sunny Day Safety for Kids, November 2005 (accessed online).

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Explore frame materials, lens options and sports-specific sunwear
- View the UV Index forecast, issued daily by the National Weather Service and EPA
- Learn why the Friday before Memorial Day is Don't Fry Day and how you can get involved

## ENDNOTES

- 1 World Health Organization. Global solar UV index fact sheet, August 2002 (accessed online).
- 2 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, SunWise Program. "Action Steps for Sun Safety." July 2010 (accessed online).
- 3 Truhan AP. Sun protection in childhood. *Clinical Pediatrics* 30(12):676-681, 1991.