

Knowing how to limit exposure to UV radiation is the key to a healthy and fun sun experience.

- Limit your UV risk when you are working outdoors!
- Enjoy your holiday without getting burnt by the Sun!



## WHO INTERSUN - the global UV project



Through INTERSUN, WHO provides scientific information and practical advice on the health impact and environmental effects of exposure to UV radiation.

INTERSUN collaborators:

- UNEP: United Nations Environmental Programme
- WMO: World Meteorological Organization
- IARC: International Agency for Research on Cancer
- ICNIRP: International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection.

Several WHO collaborating centres are also actively involved in INTERSUN.

More information on WHO INTERSUN can be found at:  
[www.who.int/uv/intersunprogramme](http://www.who.int/uv/intersunprogramme)

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# Sunshine and health

## How to enjoy the Sun safely



World Health  
Organization

Sunlight is essential for health, but it also carries risks. Solar ultraviolet (UV) radiation can cause a range of diseases, but there are effective ways to prevent these problems — and still enjoy the Sun! A simple but most important message is:

## AVOID OVEREXPOSURE TO SUNLIGHT

Health risks of overexposure to UV radiation include:

- Sunburn and other skin changes: sunburn ranges from skin reddening to severe and painful blistering of the skin.
- Cataract of the eye lens: opacities in the eye lens lead to decreased vision and eventual blindness.
- Skin carcinoma: several types of malignant skin tumours of the non-melanoma type are caused by UV radiation.
- Malignant melanoma of the skin: this is a very severe cancer that can develop many years after excessive exposure to the Sun.

In many countries, health problems associated with exposure to UV radiation are increasing, particularly skin cancer. Increased exposure to sunlight clearly plays a role. Most of the life-long UV exposure is accumulated in childhood when the risk of sunburn is greatest. Therefore protecting children against UV radiation is particularly important.

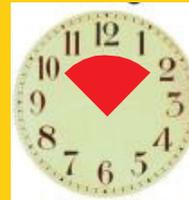


## WHO promotes six simple measures to ensure that you enjoy the Sun safely:

- **Protect children**  
Children are particularly vulnerable to UV radiation and often spend more time outdoors than adults. Parents should take special care to protect them from solar UV radiation. Babies under 12 months should always remain in the shade.



- **Limit time in the midday Sun**  
The Sun's UV rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. (= 2 hours each side of the solar noon). Limit exposure to the Sun during these hours.



- **Use shade wisely**  
Seek shade when UV rays are the most intense. The shadow rule: "Watch your shadow — short shadow, seek shade!" may be helpful.



- **Wear protective clothing**  
A hat with a wide brim and tightly woven, loose-fitting clothes provide protection from the Sun. Sunglasses that filter all UV-A and UV-B radiation will greatly reduce the risk of eye damage.



- **Use sunscreen**  
Liberal application of a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15+ and re-application every two hours, or after working, swimming, playing or exercising outdoors, can help to reduce the skin-damaging effects of UV radiation. Don't prolong your stay in the Sun even if you have used sunscreen.

- **Know the UV index**



The UV index is a measure of UV radiation (see [www.who.int/uv](http://www.who.int/uv)). The higher the UV index, the higher the risk of skin and eye damage. Use the UV index to plan sun-safe outdoor activities. When the UV index predicts radiation levels of 3 (moderate) or above, sun safety precautions should be taken.