

# Guide to Sunscreen

## Basic Information:

Sunlight contains three different spectrums of ultraviolet (UV) light. Ultraviolet C (UVC) light is primarily blocked by the ozone layer and is not an issue for us on Earth. However, **Ultraviolet A (UVA)** and **Ultraviolet B (UVB)** light do reach the earth's surface and cause multiple different effects on the skin.

In fact, we know that UV light is the most important risk factor we can control to decrease your chances of developing skin cancer. This is extremely important considering that approximately 1 in 5 Americans will get skin cancer during their lifetime.

UV light also causes sunburns, weakens your immune system in the skin, and causes premature aging. Aging caused by UV light includes brown spots, wrinkles, uneven pigment, and rough texture.

It's important to know that **UVB light does not penetrate glass, but UVA light does**. This means you still get damaging rays through windows in your house, office, and car.

## Sunscreen and SPF:

**SPF** stands for **Sun Protection Factor**. It is a measure of the **UVB protection** you are getting. For example, an SPF 30 means you can stay out in the sun 30 times longer without getting a sunburn. So, if you normally get a sunburn in 10 minutes, you can now stay out for 300 minutes without burning.

Since both UVA and UVB protection are very important, you should always pick a sunscreen that is labeled as "**broad spectrum**". This label ensures it will protect against both UVA and UVB rays.

There are two types of sunscreens:

- **Physical (Mineral) Blockers:** These contain **zinc oxide** or **titanium dioxide** as the active ingredients. We feel that zinc oxide is the best available because it blocks the

largest amount of harmful UV rays. Look for a sunscreen with at least **5% zinc oxide**.

- **Chemical Blockers:** These contain active ingredients such as avobenzone, oxybenzone, and octinoxate.

Some sunscreens will contain both physical and chemical blockers.

## How to Use Sunscreen:

Wearing sunscreen daily is one of the most effective ways to protect your skin and prevent premature aging, discoloration, and scarring.

- **Apply sunscreen every day** to all sun-exposed areas, including the face, neck, chest, and hands—even on cloudy days.
- Choose a **medical-grade, broad-spectrum sunscreen** with at least **SPF 30** to protect against both UVA and UVB rays.
- We recommend **medical-grade sunscreens** such as **EltaMD** and **Revision Intellishade** for their proven effectiveness, elegant formulations, and added skin-care benefits.
- Apply sunscreen **15–30 minutes before going outdoors** to allow it to fully absorb.
- **Reapply at least every hour** when outside, or more often if you're swimming or sweating.
- Make sure your sunscreen is labeled "**water resistant**" (effective for 40 minutes of water exposure) or "**very water resistant**" (effective for 80 minutes).
- Use enough product—about **one ounce (a shot glass full)** for your entire body.
- **Don't forget your lips!** Choose a lip balm with at least **SPF 30** for complete protection.

## Other Sun Protection Tips:

- Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes.
- Avoid being outdoors between **10 AM and 4 PM** as much as possible, as the sun's rays are strongest during this time.

- When outdoors, seek shade.
- Wear sun-protective clothing with a high **UPF** rating. A UPF rating of 50 means the fabric blocks 98% of the sun's UV rays.
- Be extra careful around sand, water, and snow, as these surfaces reflect UV light and increase your exposure.
- Remember, you still get up to 85% of UV light on cloudy days.

## Helpful Hints:

We recommend choosing a sunscreen with **at least 5% zinc oxide** for optimal protection. **EltaMD sunscreens** offer even higher concentrations for superior broad-spectrum defense. We especially like using physical blockers on children and those with sensitive skin, as they are less likely to cause irritation or an allergic reaction.

Some sunscreens with physical blockers may leave a whitish color on the skin. Some physical sunscreens also come tinted, and many women love this option for daily use.

Swim shirts and hats are a great way to get added protection for kids at the pool.