

HDHeartbeat

A Health Designs Newsletter



Summer Safety: Protecting Your Skin from Harmful UV Rays

Sun exposure is a double-edged sword when it comes to comparing risk vs benefits. Vitamin D helps strengthen your bones and keep them dense. It is found sparingly in some foods like fatty fish and fortified in others like orange juice or milk. So how do we get our daily limits of Vitamin D? Look (figuratively and not literally) no further than the sun outside. That's right, standing out in the sunshine helps our skin synthesize vitamin D3 which our liver and kidneys then convert to the active vitamin D form. Follow these tips to stay safe this summer!

- Limit time out in the sun between 10am and 4pm as this is when the sun's UV rays are the strongest.

- Remember, less is more. Only about 8-10 minutes in full sun exposure at around 12pm is necessary to get those benefits from the sun.
- Wear sun protective clothing that has a UV protection factor (UPF) that is made of tightly woven materials.
- Wide-brimmed hats can help protect your scalp, face, and neck from the UV rays.
- Wear sunglasses to protect your peepers!
- Last but certainly not least, wear a broad spectrum and water-resistant sunscreen with a SPF of at least 30. Be sure to coat all areas of the skin that are not covered.

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Sunscreen 101: How to Choose and Use It Properly

Choosing the right sunscreen can seem like a daunting task as you stroll down the store aisles. Broad spectrum? SPF? When choosing a sunscreen consider the following criteria from the American Academy of Dermatology Association:

- Broad spectrum means that sunscreen protects you from both UVA and UVB rays, both of which can cause skin cancer.
- SPF is the sun protection factor of that sunscreen. It is recommended to use a sunscreen with SPF of at least 30.

- Water resistant is how long that sunscreen will stay on your skin when wet. There is no such thing as waterproof sunscreen as both our sweat and water will wash sunscreen from our skin. Choose a sunscreen that is water resistant for 40 to 80 minutes.

Sunscreen is not a one and done solution and MUST be reapplied throughout the day. The general rule of thumb is to use about a shot glass worth of sunscreen to protect exposed skin. Reapply sunscreen every two hours you are out in the sun or immediately after swimming or sweating profusely.

Easy Lemon Orzo Salad With Feta

- 2 C of orzo, uncooked
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 English cucumber, chopped
- ½ red onion, diced small
- 6 oz feta cheese, crumbled
- 2-3 garlic cloves, minced
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- ¼ cup fresh basil, chopped
- Juice and zest of 1 lemon
- ½ C extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp honey
- ½ tsp sea salt
- ½ tsp cracked pepper



1. Cook orzo according to package instructions. Chop all veggies.
2. When orzo is cooked al dente, drain the water and then pour cold water over the orzo to cool it off. Drain the water completely.
3. Add the orzo and all other ingredients except the feta into a large bowl. Toss the salad well.
4. Fold the feta cheese into the salad.
5. Chill until ready to serve. Toss just before serving.
6. Refrigerate in a sealed container for about 5 days.

HD MONTHLY CHALLENGE

Make a pledge to practice sun safety this month. Schedule that skin check appointment, purchase and use sunscreen, or buy a new pair of sunglasses to protect those peepers!

The Link Between UV Exposure and Eye Health

When it comes to sun safety we largely see conversations about sunscreen and skin cancer, leaving our eye health to be majorly overlooked. But did you know that overexposure to the sun's UV rays can also harm your eyes.

- UV light exposure damages all structures of the eye leading to corneal damage, cataracts, and macular degeneration.
- Acute photokeratitis is like sunburn but for your eyes. This occurs when our eyes are exposed to large amounts of UV radiation but for a shorter amount of time. Symptoms typically include eye pain or redness, tearing/watery eyes, blurry vision. Swelling, light sensitivity, gritty sensation in your eyes, or seeing halos.
- Cancers of the eyelid, both carcinoma and squamos, are linked to UV exposure.

- Increased sun exposure without eye protection can lead to the development of irreversible cataracts, a cloudy area in your eyes' lenses causing your vision to become blurry, hazy, or less colorful.
- Pterygium, or Surfer's Eye, is a growth that begins in the sclera (white part of your eye) and extends to the cornea, leading to changes in vision or loss.
- Age-related macular degeneration (AMD), a condition marked a breakdown in the macula (part of eye that controls sharp, straight vision) leading to changes in vision, can be caused by prolonged exposure to UV rays without protection.

When taking care of eye health be sure to avoid looking directly in the sun. Also, carefully select a pair of sunglasses that offers 100% UV protection with a UV400 rating.

HOW TO PROTECT YOUR SKIN FROM SUN DAMAGE YEAR-ROUND

Let's continue the conversation on our blog post! Click the below icon to be taken to our newest blog post where we'll touch on why everyday sun protection is important year round and what steps you can take to continue having fun in the sun!

