

Dr. Sami Says

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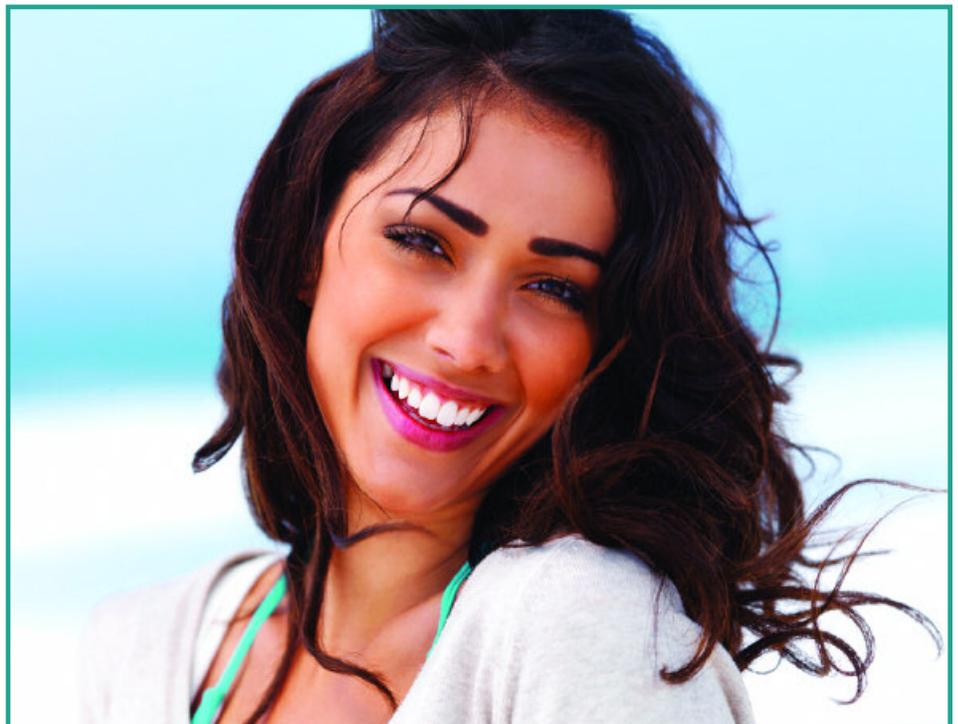
So what is the best way to protect yourself from the powerful rays of the sun? If you answered “sunscreen” you are only partly correct.

While sunscreens do offer some protection, you need to do more to completely avoid sunburn. All sunscreens are also not the same. Some are better while others don’t protect you from both types of rays that cause skin damage. In fact there are some reports that suggest that most sunscreens may not offer the protection you need.

According to the American Cancer Society, skin cancer is the most common of all cancers, accounting for nearly half of all cancers in the United States. Since most skin cancers develop on sun-exposed areas of the body — like the face, ears, neck, lips, and the backs of the hands — you can use other strategies to protect yourself.



Limiting your time in the sun, especially between peak sunlight hours of 10 AM and 4 PM, and wearing protective clothing are two of the most important things you need to do to avoid sunburn and skin cancer. 🍏



PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF YOUR SKIN

The skin is the body’s largest organ. It protects us against infections, injury and heat. It helps keep the body’s temperature normal. One of the most important things we can do to protect the health of our skin is to avoid ultraviolet (UV) rays that are produced by the sun, in-door tanning beds and sunlamps. UV rays damage skin cells, cause wrinkles, early aging of the skin and skin cancer.

Practicing safe skin care includes three important steps:

1. **Limit exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays**
2. **Do regular skin self-exams to detect unhealthy skin conditions**
3. **Get appropriate care when problems exist**

Remember the steps below to help you protect your skin from UV rays.

- ▶ **Avoid the midday sun, 10 AM to 4 PM.** Even on cloudy days almost 80 percent of UV rays still get through.
- ▶ **Use sunscreen** anytime that you will be in the sun for over 20 minutes and apply it generously at least 15 minutes prior to being exposed. Use a water-resistant sunscreen with a SPF (Sun Protection Factor) of 15 or higher. Make sure the sunscreen protects against UVA and UVB rays. Re-apply every two hours.
- ▶ **Wear protective clothing** from the top of your head to your toes and wear sunglasses. You can also purchase clothes made from sun-protective fabrics.
- ▶ **Avoid tanning beds or sunlamps.** UV rays from these sources can be more intense than the sun’s rays.

Note: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has determined that ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun and manufactured sources including tanning beds and sunlamps to be a cancer causing substance.

PROTECT YOUR SKIN

R A E I E E D E A S S E
 N T S E L F E X A M A O
 O S T P E T R O X R A L
 I N H K D D M N I T V D
 T E L O I V A R T L U S
 C E L C L O T H I N G T
 E R N E R A O T S C R L
 T C R G O A L T U I E I
 O S A U U G O E I E P A
 R N Y V N H G X N G T A
 P U I A S S I H S U S O
 T S V K R E S R L O H A
 O V O B S N T U A S E G

UVA	SKIN	DERMATOLOGIST
SUNSCREEN	ORGAN	RAYS
SHADE	UVB	PROTECTION
ULTRAVIOLET	SELF EXAM	CLOTHING

The risks from UV exposure depend on many factors including your age, the amount of UV rays you have been exposed to over your lifetime, whether you are fair-skinned or dark-skinned, if you have a family history of skin cancer or have had skin cancer and where you live.



Whether you are at a high or low risk level a monthly skin self-exam helps you identify unhealthy skin conditions especially skin cancer which has a 95 percent cure rate when found early.

If an area of your skin is suspicious contact your doctor or a dermatologist for an examination.

Everyone should have routine skin examinations during their doctor appointments. People who are at higher risk of having skin cancer should ask their doctor if more frequent examinations are needed.

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Your Registered Nurse Care Managers are Here for You



HOW TO DO A SKIN SELF EXAM

- ▶ Do your self exam in a well-lit room
- ▶ Use a full-length mirror and a handheld mirror
- ▶ Examine your entire body, including your scalp and other areas that are not exposed to the sun
- ▶ Key an eye on existing moles, birthmarks, lesions or other marks on your skin and watch for changes in their color, size and shape
- ▶ Look for warning signs including moles that bleed, itch or change (color, size, shape), sores that do not heal, and changes in your skin's texture

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