July 2022

Welcome to this month's edition of Live Well, Work Well. In this issue we will be focusing on the importance of UV Safety Awareness.

What is UVR, UVA, UVB and UVC?

UVR is part of the electromagnetic spectrum emitted by the sun. The sun emits 3 types of ultraviolet

(UV) light/radiation: UVA, UVB and UVC. UVC radiation is blocked by the ozone layer whilst UVA and UVB both reach the earth's surface and penetrate our skin.

UVB rays have a short wavelength that reaches the outer layer of your skin called the epidermis and UVA rays have a longer wavelength that can penetrate the middle of the skin called the dermis.

Small amounts of skin exposure to solar UVR are essential in the production of vitamin D and are beneficial for health. However, it's important to acknowledge that whilst some sun is good for us, it should not be taken to excess - everything in moderation!

https://www.skcin.org/skinCancerInformation/solarUVRadiation.htm



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SOLAR UV RADIATION

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Solar Ultra Violet Radiation (UVR) cannot be seen or felt and is a known carcinogen to humans.

Understanding solar UVR is vital for understanding why sun protection control measures are recommended to protect our skin and how if we are not protected properly, UV can damage the skin and lead to skin cancer.

Did you know that UVR from the sun:

- Is high-energy radiation, capable of causing damage to living organisms.
- Is carcinogenic to humans. Cannot be seen or felt.
- Is not related to temperature.
- Can pass through clouds.
- Can pass through loosely woven material.
- Can bounce off reflective surfaces such as metal, concrete, water and snow.
- Is essential to health in small amounts.

UV Safety – The Sun Can Burn You!

Summers in most of Texas can be harsh, not only because of the high temperatures but also because of the intense sun rays. UV safety is a matter to not take lightly.

Unless we use the right protection, we risk getting sunburned. In fact, while rare, severe sunburn can be lifethreating.

What is a Sunburn?

Unless you take UV safety precautions, you will risk getting a sunburn. Extreme ultraviolet (UV) exposure can cause severe damage to our skin; this is what we know as sunburn.

It only takes 10 minutes of intense UV exposure for our skin to deploy its defense mechanism to try and defend itself.

The first hint that something is not right, is

redness. Then your skin will start feeling tight; this is as a response of it losing its moisture and hydration. Then slowly, the cells will begin to thicken, and your body will start to produce melanin (skin pigment) to try and stop the UV rays from penetrating the deeper layers of the skin and causing damage to the cell's DNA.

Most sunburn episodes are short-lived and mild, but you should still try to prevent them as they can increase your chances of developing skin cancer later in life.

Who is at Risk of Sunburn?

Anyone who is out in the sun for extended times or when the UV index is high is at risk of getting sunburned. However, some people are more vulnerable than others. UV safety is particularly vital in the following cases:

- Fair Skin People. The lighter your skin color is, the more vulnerable you are to sunburns
- Children and the Elderly. Infants and children under 6, as well as adults over 60, have a higher risk of sunburn
- People Taking Certain Medications. Some medications can increase your sensitivity to sun rays. You should talk to your doctor or pharmacist about any medicines you are taking before you go out in the sun.
- Anyone with a Skin Condition. People with psoriasis, eczema, vitiligo, and other skin conditions may need to take extra precautions to avoid sunburns



How to Know When a Sunburn Could Be Serious

Most sunburns don't need medical attention, but in some cases, when the burns are very severe, you will need to receive treatment.

Here is when it's time to seek care for your sunburn.

Sun Poisoning

Sun poisoning is a serious sunburn allergic reaction that causes skin inflammation. Aside from the bumps on your skin, you may also experience pain, itching, fever, chills, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, dehydration, and electrolyte imbalances.

If not treated correctly, sun poisoning could lead to lifethreatening infection and shock. So, if you think you or someone you know is experiencing sun poisoning, you need to go to the nearest emergency room to be evaluated and treated.

You've Developed a Skin Infection

Many sunburns are severe enough that they cause blisters. Most times, these only require a topical cream to heal; however, in some cases, the blisters can become infected. You can tell you have a skin infection if you notice swelling, pus or red streaks leading from the blister. In this case, you will likely need antibiotics to treat the infection, which means you see your doctor

Beyond UV Safety. Preventing Sunburns and other Sun-Related Injuries

Summer is supposed to be a fun time for everyone, with lots of outdoor activities. To make sure you avoid the risks of sunburns it is recommended that:

- You apply sunscreen 30 minutes before going out in the sun
- Reapply sunscreen every 2-hours
- Drink plenty of water
- Stay out of the sun between 10 am and 4 pm when possible

https://www.altusemergency.com/uv-safety-tips/







According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, studies show that long-term exposure to bright sunlight may increase the risk of cataracts and growths on the eye, including cancer.

UV rays reflected off sand and water can cause eyes to sunburn, potentially resulting in temporary blindness in just a few hours. In support of UV Safety Month this July, the American Academy of Ophthalmology reminds the public of the importance of shielding eyes from the sun's harmful rays with 100% UV-blocking sunglasses and broad-brimmed hats.

Here are some tips from the American Academy of Ophthalmology:

- Don't focus on color or darkness of sunglass lenses: Select sunglasses that block UV rays. Don't be deceived by color or cost. The ability to block UV light is not dependent on the price tag or how dark the sunglass lenses are.
- Check for 100 percent UV protection: Make sure your sunglasses block 100 percent of UV-A rays and UV-B rays.
- Choose wrap-around styles: Ideally, your sunglasses, either the lenses of the frame, should wrap all the way around to your temples, so the sun's rays can't enter from the side.
- Wear a hat: In addition to your sunglasses, wear a broad-brimmed hat to protect your eyes.
- Don't rely on contact lenses: Even if you wear contact lenses with UV protection, remember your sunglasses.



- Don't be fooled by clouds: The sun's rays can pass through haze and thin clouds. Sun damage to eyes can occur anytime during the year, not just in the summertime.
- Protect your eyes during peak sun times: Sunglasses should be worn whenever outside, and it's especially important to wear sunglasses in the early afternoon and at higher altitudes, where UV light is more intense.
- Never look directly at the sun. Looking directly at the sun at any time, including during an eclipse, can lead to solar retinopathy, damage to the eye's retina from solar radiation.
- Don't forget the kids: Everyone is at risk, including children.
- Protect their eyes with hats and sunglasses. In addition, if possible, try to keep children out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., when the sun's UV rays are the strongest.

In addition to the proper safety eyewear, regular eye exams for early detection and treatment of eye conditions and diseases are essential to maintaining good vision at every stage of life.

According to the American Academy of Ophthalmology, children with a family history of childhood vision problems should be screened for common childhood eye problems before the age of 5. If eye problems such as visual changes, pain, flashes of light, seeing spots, excessive tearing and excessive dryness occur, they should see an eye doctor. Adults between the ages of 40 to 65 should have an eye exam every two years. Adults over the age of 65 should have an eye exam at least every one to two years.

https://discoveryeye.org/uv-safety-awareness-month/



How does the sun and UV cause cancer?

- Too much ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun can damage DNA in your skin cells and cause skin cancer.
- Getting sunburnt just once every two years can triple your risk of melanoma skin cancer, compared to never being burnt.

How can UV cause skin cancer?

Too much UV radiation from the sun or sunbeds can damage the DNA in our skin cells. DNA tells our cells how to function. If enough DNA damage builds up over time, it can cause cells to start growing out of control, which can lead to skin cancer.

Anyone can develop skin cancer, but some people can have a higher risk, including people who burn more easily.

It's important to remember that skin damage doesn't only happen on holiday or in hot, sunny places. The sun is often strong enough to cause damage even when it's cloudy.

Whilst we all need some sun to help us make vitamin D for healthy bones, it's minutes rather than hours. There's no need to sunbathe to get enough vitamin D and there is no such thing as healthy tanning. Read more about the sun and vitamin D.

Getting sunburn just once every two years can triple your risk of melanoma skin cancer, compared to never being burnt.

Did you know the signs of sunburn can depend on your skin tone?

Sunburn doesn't have to be raw, peeling or blistering. If your skin has gone pink or red in the sun, it's sunburnt. For people with darker skin, it may just feel irritated, tender or itchy.

Say YES to⁴ Sun Protection Say NO to Skin Cancer

Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the U.S. One in five Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime, and nearly 20 Americans die from melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, every day. 222

Since exposure to the sun's harmful UV rays is the most preventable risk factor for s skin cancer, protect your skin by: • Seeking shade Wearing sun-protective clothing

• Applying sunscreen to all skin not covered by clothing

What should I do if I get sunburnt?

If you notice signs of sunburn, you should come out of the sun and cover up to help stop any more damage from happening. Putting on more sunscreen won't help and won't let you safely stay out in the sun for longer.

'After sun' lotion can help sunburnt skin feel better, but it can't repair any DNA damage.

Getting sunburnt once doesn't mean you will definitely get skin cancer. But the more times you get sunburnt the higher your risk of melanoma skin cancer. Reduce your risk of sunburn and protect your skin by using a combination of shade, clothing and sunscreen.

Can skin cancer spread?

Yes. Melanoma skin cancer can grow down through the layers of the skin and spread to other parts of the body.

Remember, when skin cancer is found at an early stage, treatment is more likely to be successful. If you have noticed any unusual changes to your skin, including a mark or mole that's new, has changed or been there for a while, speak to your doctor. Read more about melanoma skin cancer symptoms.



water-resistant and has an SPF 30 or higher, it can effectively protect you from the sun. Make sure you reapply it every two hours, or after swimming or sweating.



BlueCross BlueShield of Texas

BLUE VISION News for Employer Groups

Care for Your Skin in the Summer Sun

Protect Yourself from the Sun

Show your skin a little TLC to help to prevent wrinkles and age spots and other skin problems. It will also lower your risk for skin cancer.

- Slather on sunscreen. Apply one with 15 SPF or higher every two hours and right after swimming.
- Stay in the shade. Avoid the sun when its rays are their strongest, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Cover your skin. Wear light, breathable, protective clothing to put an extra layer of
 protection between you and the sun's rays.

Don't Smoke

Smoking makes your skin look older. It narrows the tiny blood vessels in the skin. With less blood flow, your skin doesn't get the nourishment it needs. It also depletes the skin of oxygen and nutrients important for healthy skin and its ability to heal.

Rethink Your Skin Care Routine

Be gentle with your skin. Although your skin care process is good, it might take a toll on your skin. Here are a few things that you can do. Bathe with warm water. Chose a natural soap. Pat yourself dry. And don't forget to moisturize.

Eat a Healthy Diet

Drink plenty of water to keep your skin hydrated. Eat lots of fruits and vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins. Rich in vitamins, natural anti-oxidants and essential fatty-acids, they help keep skin healthy.

Manage Stress

Your skin is sensitive. Uncontrolled stress can trigger breakouts and other skin problems. Give your skin and mood a healthy boost by exercising, getting enough sleep, watching a funny movie or listening to your favorite music. They all help keep stress under wraps.

Sources: Melanama Overview, 🗳 The Skin Cancer Foundation, 2021; Melanama of the Skin Statistics, 📽 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021; Skin Care: 5 Tips for Healthy Skin, 📽 Mayo Clinic, 2019; Sun Safety, 📽 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021; 10 Tips to Healthy Skin from the Inside Out, 📽 UT Health East Texas, 2018.

Last Month's Events:

<u>"Men's Health Awareness Seminar"</u> Jesus E. Gonzalez - \$10.00 Gift Card

"Family Health & Fitness Day" June 9, 2022





<u>"Employee Picnic"</u> June 17, 2022

Upcoming Events:

Walking Program Tuesdays and Thursdays 4:30PM at your designated facility

> Active Shooter Training Wednesday, July 6, 2022

8:30 AM – 11:30 AM & 1:30 PM – 4:30 pm Event Center

<u>CPR Training</u> Thursday, July 7, 2022 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM Central Fire Station

Softball Game Police vs Fire Tuesday, July 19, 2022 7:00 PM at the CWV Park

Health & Wellness Seminar <u>"UV Safety Awareness"</u> <u>Thursday, July 21, 2022</u> <u>2:30 PM – 3:30 PM</u> <u>Via Zoom:</u> <u>https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9904662781?pwd=SGVIL3JZRFVR</u> <u>dENzWXI5VUxFT1ZUQT09</u>

