

SAFER SUNNING IN SEVEN STEPS



Department of Health and Human Services
Food and Drug Administration
5600 Fishers Lane (HFI-40)
Rockville, MD 20857

September 2000
(FDA) 99-1279

FDA U.S. Food and Drug Administration

PFEM#000155

When Outside in The Sun

The Food and Drug Administration, or FDA, is a United States government agency. FDA makes rules about many products consumers use when sunning or tanning. These rules help protect the health of consumers.



Beware Of the Dangers

Harmful rays from the sun, sunlamps and tanning beds may cause:

- ☀ skin cancer, which can be deadly
- ☀ eye problems

- ☀ weakened ability to fight disease
- ☀ unsightly skin spots
- ☀ wrinkles and “leathery” skin.



Take Extra Care

Be sure to follow the seven steps to safer sunning especially if you answer yes to any of these questions:

-  Do you have pale white skin?
-  Do you have blonde, red or light brown hair?
-  Were you ever treated for skin cancer?
-  Has a family member ever had skin cancer?
-  Do you have an illness? If so, ask your doctor about extra care.
-  Do you take medicines? If so, ask your doctor about extra care.

Give babies and children extra care in the sun.

Protect Yourself With the Seven Steps To Safer Sunning

1. Stay in the shade.



Avoid the sun from:



to



10 a.m.

4 p.m.

This is when sun rays are strongest. Don't be fooled by cloudy skies. Harmful rays pass through clouds.



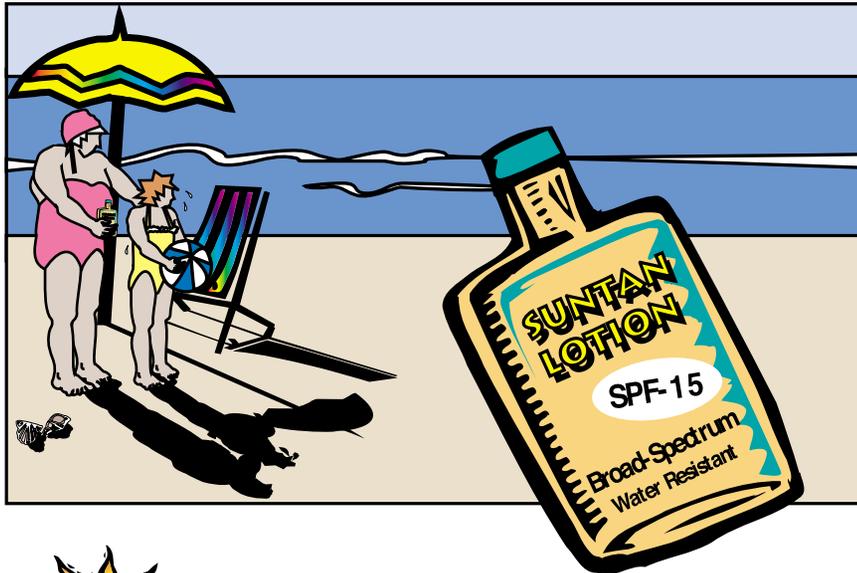
2. Use sunscreen products on your skin.

Many suntan products have sunscreens to protect your skin from the sun.

Products with sunscreens have an “SPF” number on the label. SPF stands for Sun Protection Factor. A higher number means it protects longer. Buy products with an SPF number of 15 or more.

Buy products whose label also says:

- ☀️ “broad spectrum,” meaning it protects against the two types of harmful sun rays
- ☀️ “water resistant,” meaning it stays on your skin longer, even if you get wet or sweat a lot.



Follow These Tips For Using Sunscreen Products

- ☀️ Put a sunscreen of at least SPF 15 on your skin 15 to 30 minutes before going outside.
- ☀️ Rub the sunscreen evenly on all uncovered skin. Be sure to put it on your eyelids, lips, nose, ears, neck, hands and feet. If you do not have much hair, put it on the top of your head.
- ☀️ Do not get a sunscreen in your eyes. It can sting.
- ☀️ Once in a while, put on more sunscreen while you're in the sun. Read the label to see how often to put it on.
- ☀️ Do not use a sunscreen on babies under 6 months old.
- ☀️ On children older than 6 months, use a sunscreen every time they go out.



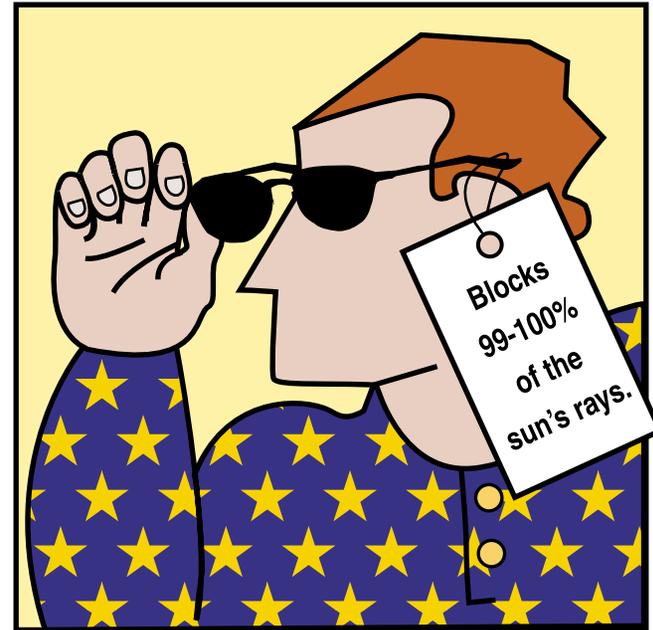
3. Wear a hat.

A hat with a wide brim helps shade the neck, ears, eyes, and head.



4. Wear sunglasses.

Buy only sunglasses with a label saying the glasses block 99 to 100 percent of the sun's rays. If there is no label, do not buy the glasses.



5. Cover up.

Wear loose, lightweight, long-sleeved shirts and long pants or long skirts when in the sun.



6. Avoid artificial tanning methods.

This includes sunlamps and tanning beds, as well as tanning pills and tanning makeup.

Tanning pills have a color additive that turns your skin orange after you take them. FDA has OK'd this color additive for coloring foods but not for tanning the skin. The large amount of color additive in tanning pills may be harmful.

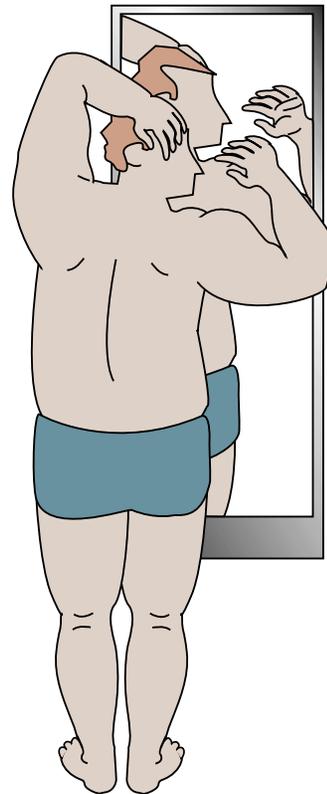
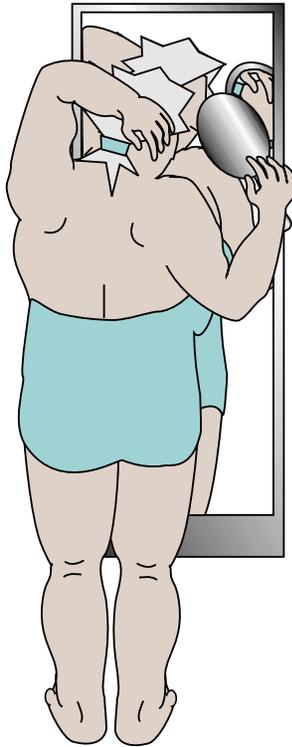
Tanning makeup is put on the skin to make it look tan. Sometimes the color can be washed off with soap and water. Other times, it wears off after a few days. These products are not sunscreen lotions and will not protect your skin from the sun.



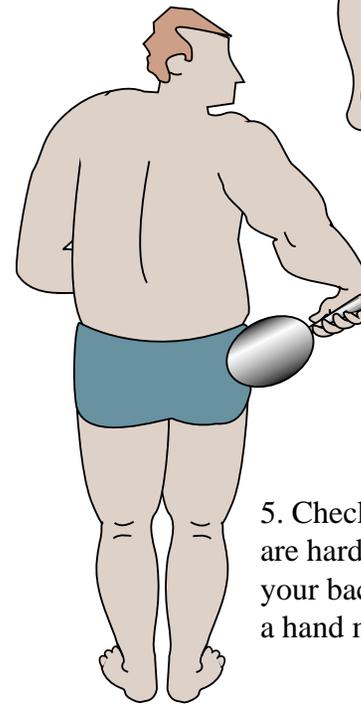
7. Check your skin regularly for signs of skin cancer.

Look for changes in the size, shape, color or feel of birthmarks, moles and spots. If you find any changes or find sores that are not healing, see your doctor.

1. Look at the back of your neck and scalp with the help of a hand mirror.

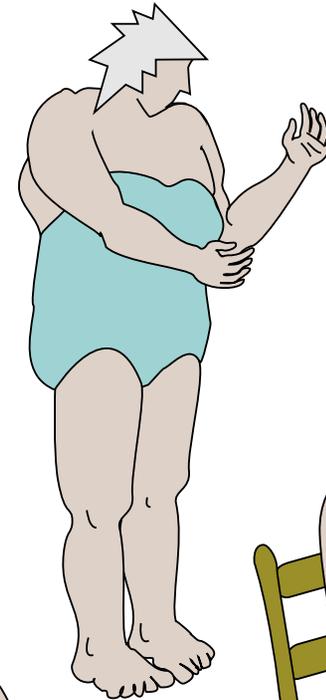


2. Look at your body—front, back and sides—in the mirror.

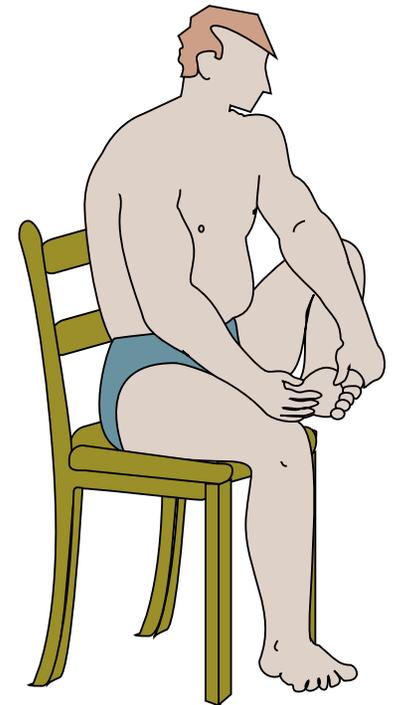


5. Check parts that are hard to see—like your back—with a hand mirror.

3. Bend your elbows and look at the undersides of your arms.



4. Look at the backs of your legs and feet.



Do You Have More Questions About Safer Sunning?

Ask your doctor or other health-care worker.

And ask FDA. There may be an FDA office near you. Look for the number in the blue pages of the phone book.



You can also contact FDA through its toll-free number, 1-888-INFOFDA (1-888-463-6332). Or, on the World Wide Web at www.fda.gov.

