

# WELL BALANCED<sup>o</sup>

- JULY 2023 -  
UV Safety Awareness Month

## STAYING SAFE IN THE *Summer Sun*



Summer is in full swing and July is the perfect month to make the most of fun in the sun. We move outside during the summer months to take advantage of swimming, bicycling, picnics, park play dates, evening dinners outside, music festivals, and playtime with pets, and while all that time soaking up Vitamin D has health benefits, it's important to know the risks of UV damage and how to keep your skin healthy all year round.

### Too Much Sun is No Fun

Fittingly, July is UV Safety Awareness Month!

Ultraviolet (UV) radiation is a form of electromagnetic radiation that comes from the sun and man-made sources like tanning beds and welding torches, according to the American Cancer Society.<sup>(1)</sup>

UV ray exposure in the sunshine can cause sunburn, premature skin aging, sun damage, weakened immune system, and can cause most types of skin cancer for all skin colors and types.

### Stay Aware

- » UV rays are strongest between 10 am and 4 pm, and during the spring and summer months.
- » Altitude can increase UV ray impacts as more UV rays reach the ground at higher elevations.
- » Even on a cloudy day, UV rays can penetrate through cloudy day, UV rays can penetrate through clouds and reach the ground.
- » Surfaces like water, sand, snow, pavement, and even foliage can reflect UV rays.<sup>(1)</sup>

### Sun Safety

If you're going to enjoy time in the sun, here are a few ways to reduce your exposure:

- » Try to stay in the shade as much as possible, especially in the middle of the day.
- » Keep your skin covered with lightweight clothing like cotton.
- » Wear a hat and sunglasses to provide protection for your scalp, face, ears, and neck.
- » Use sunscreen and SPF lip balm on any uncovered areas of skin and don't forget to re-apply every 90 minutes.
- » Avoid sunbathing or sitting directly in the sun.<sup>(1)</sup>

### Check Yourself

Not only is avoiding UV damage an important piece in preventing skin cancer but so is doing regular skin self-exams. Early detection is key when it comes to any type of cancer and if you keep up with a regular practice of checking yourself, it can go a long way.

To conduct a self-exam of your skin, you'll need a well-lit room, a full-length mirror, and a hand mirror.

- » Look over every surface of your body and get help from a spouse, roommate, or family member with areas like the backs of your ears or your scalp if needed.
- » Look for any new or changing spots, sores, rough or scaly patches, wart-like growths, and moles.
- » If you see anything of concern, especially something new, be sure to reach out to your primary care doctor or a dermatologist for a professional exam.<sup>(2)</sup>



### Want more resources on skin health?

Talk to your employer to find out what is available to you through your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or employee wellness program.

<sup>(1)</sup> <https://www.cancer.org/healthy/cancer-causes/radiation-exposure/uv-radiation.html> <sup>(2)</sup> <https://www.cancer.org/healthy/be-safe-in-sun/skin-exams.html>