



2015 SUN SAFETY GUIDE FOR CHILDREN

From your backyard to the playground, swimming pool or park, some of your kids' favorite times are spent in the sun. But during the fun, children are vulnerable to harmful sun damage, even more than adults. Protect your precious ones with this step-by-step guide from Healthy Child Healthy World, powered by EWG.

STEP 1. KNOW THE RISK

Why Sun Safety Matters

Skin cancer is the most common form of all cancers in the U.S. The steps you take today can help protect your family from being counted in these numbers:

73,877

Estimated melanoma diagnoses in 2015

2.8X

Increase in new melanoma cases over the last 35 years

2 MILLION+

*Increase in new melanoma cases over the last 35 years
Estimated new cases of basal and squamous cell skin cancer diagnoses in the U.S. each year*

STEP 2. START NOW FOR LIFELONG BENEFITS

Kids have adorable pink cheeks, but red, sore, blistered or peeling skin? That means far too much sun. It takes only a few blistering sunburns during childhood to double their lifetime chance of developing a serious form of skin cancer. Adopt these healthy habits to keep your kids safe now and in the future:

- Cover up. The best way to protect your kids from sun damage is to keep their skin covered. Wide-brimmed hats or visors and loose-fitting shirts, shorts and pants

block harmful UV rays. Clothing made with thick fabric, tight weaves and dark or bright colors can provide extra protection.

- Wear sunglasses. A good pair of general-purpose medium to dark shades with large lenses and wraparound design will help shield eyes from the UV radiation that causes cataracts.
- Stay in the shade. Whenever kids are outdoors, keep them in the shade as much as possible. Use the stroller's hood or canopy, look for trees and overhangs, and install umbrellas or awnings over favorite play spots like your backyard or patio. (Bonus: shade keeps little feet happy on hot sidewalks and play equipment.) Keep a sun umbrella in your car for impromptu stops.
- Schedule outdoor time. Early morning and late afternoon are the best times for outdoor fun. The sun is lower then; UV radiation peaks at midday.

NO SUN FOR INFANTS

- » Keep infants under six months out of direct sun. Their skin is not yet protected by melanin.
- » Consult your doctor before using sunscreen, but when shade isn't an option, the American Academy of Pediatrics says that small amounts of sunscreen can be used on infants as a last resort. Zinc and titanium-based sunscreens are best.
- » Talk to your pediatrician about vitamin D. Children and people with limited sun exposure may be deficient; breast-fed infants need supplements.



STEP 3. CHOOSE AND USE SAFE, EFFECTIVE SUNSCREEN

Follow these tips and visit the EWG Sun Safety Guide to find a good sunscreen for your family:

- Apply and reapply. Apply sunscreen liberally and reapply it often, especially if your child is playing in the water or sweating a lot. Since young children's skin is especially sensitive to chemical allergens, test sunscreen by applying a small amount on the inside of your child's wrist the day before you plan to use it.
- Stick with lotion. Spray-on sunscreens seem great for squirming kids and hard-to-reach areas, but they may pose serious inhalation risks and provide inadequate coverage.
- Check ingredients. Certain ingredients may pose health risks. Avoid retinyl palmitate (vitamin A) and oxybenzone, a synthetic estrogen that penetrates the skin and can disrupt the hormone system. Look for zinc and titanium-based sunscreens instead.
- Beware high SPF. That high "sun protection factor" refers only to protection against UVB radiation, which burns the skin. It does little to protect you from damaging UVA rays and may give a false sense of security. Avoid products labeled with anything higher than SPF 50 and reapply sunscreen often, regardless of SPF.
- Skip sunscreen/bug repellent combos. Use separate products to ensure adequate application of both products and limit absorption of repellent ingredients.

STEP 4. TAKE GOOD HABITS ON THE GO

Practice sun safety at home and everywhere life takes you with these simple steps:

- Plan ahead. Any outing can turn into unexpected sun time. Pack your diaper bag, purse and car with essential sun safety supplies like protective clothing, hats and sunscreen. Send your child to school or daycare with these as well.
- Ask questions. Your child's school or daycare may have policies that interfere with sun safety, such as treating sunscreen as a medicine or prohibiting hats or sunglasses. Ask about these policies, if shade is available on the playground, and what times of day outdoor play is scheduled.
- Tell your network. Dropping off your kids for a playdate? Tell your family and friends why sun safety is important and how they can support your efforts. They'll learn a few tips for themselves.



STEP 5. SET A GOOD EXAMPLE

Parents, take note! One of the best ways to keep your kids safe is to model good behavior. In surveys, fewer than one in three adults report using sunscreen frequently, and even fewer say they routinely seek shade, wear a hat or cover up with long sleeves. Dads – surveys show that you are half as likely as moms to wear sunscreens.

Teach your kids good habits now to help protect them for life.