

exposure to the sun. If these were to be applied when you are in the sun, some may have the opposite effect of a sun-cream and actually amplify the sun's rays causing you to burn. Always wash off after-sun before being exposed to sunlight and reapply a sun-cream as necessary.

The SPF of your sun-cream is very important. This tends to denote how much the cream will act as a protective barrier from the sun's potentially harmful UVB rays. UVB rays are the part of the sunlight spectrum of energy that leads to sunburn. Therefore if you do not want to burn, use a sun-cream with a factor of 30 to 50. For those of you who have developed a tan and have carefully applied a factor 30 to 50 cream for several days of exposure, you may consider using a cream as low as 20. Never have prolonged exposure to the sun without using a cream or clothes as a protective layer. Even for those whose skin has adapted to the sunlight, we would not usually recommend any sun-cream or lotion with an SPF of less than 20.

UVA rays from the sun do not directly burn the skin to the extent that UVB rays do. Therefore, the damage from these UVA rays is not as immediately obvious. However, it is accepted that UVA rays are a factor that leads to many types of skin cancer including malignant melanoma. You must ensure that any products that you use protect against UVA rays from the sun. The star rating on the back of your sun-cream denotes how much the manufacturers intend their product to protect from these harmful elements of sun radiation. The star rating is from one to five. We only recommend that you use a product with a five star UVA protection rating.

Sun products are available in many forms including creams, lotions, gels and sprays. None are necessarily better than the other, but the SPF and UVA star ratings tend to be the most important factors. Always reapply the sun products regularly and follow the manufacturer's guidance. Ask a suitably qualified professional for advice if you are unsure. The benefit with sprays is that they offer access to parts of the body that may be difficult to apply a cream to. However, a cream may be a more suitable option for those areas where you can constantly reapply the product, such as the tops of shoulders and facial area. If you swim or take a midday shower, remember to reapply the sun-cream. Even those that are marketed as water resistant can lose a significant amount of their protecting properties after swimming and showering. Always keep sensible and safe in the sun and ask a healthcare professional for advice.

A list of newly available treatment options will be published in the August Newsletter. Keep a look out for this important information. In the meantime, enjoy the sun and keep safe.

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