



Safety Series

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Nationwide Children's Hospital  
700 Children's Drive | Columbus, OH 43205  
[NationwideChildrens.org](http://NationwideChildrens.org)



# Sun Safety



*Helping you, as a parent,  
to make healthy and safe choices.*



The questions and answers in this brochure are designed to help you, as a parent, to make healthy and safe choices for your children.



### How should sunscreen be used?

- » Apply sunscreen a half hour before going outside and let it soak into your skin. Reapply every two hours, or more often if you have been in the water. Even sweat and waterproof sunscreens need to be reapplied.

### What is SPF?

SPF stands for Sun Protection Factor. Always use an SPF of 15 or stronger. Sunscreen should be used as protection, not as an excuse to stay in the sun longer.

### What is UV?

“UV” stands for ultraviolet. The sun gives off UVA and UVB rays. SPF (*sun protection factor*) is only for UVB rays. There is no FDA (*Federal Drug Administration*) rating for UVA rays.

- » UVA rays go deep into the skin. They will not cause a quick burn and you will not know you have had too much sun until much later in life.
- » UVB rays cause skin to turn red and feel burned.

### What are simple things I can do as a parent to help protect my child from the sun?

- » Limit time in the sun between 10am-3pm when the rays are the strongest.
- » Be a role model. Follow all the safety rules whenever you are outside. Children learn by example.
- » Avoid tanning booths and sun lamps.
- » Don't forget your teens. They need to be safe in the sun just like everyone else.
- » Stress using sunscreen. Use sunscreen not only at the beach, but while involved in all outdoor activities such as mowing lawns, washing cars and playing sports.
- » Buy children sunglasses made of unbreakable plastic that block out 100% of UVA and UVB light.

### What is Paba?

Paba is a substance found in many sunscreens. If your child is sensitive to Paba, look for Paba-free sunscreens. It will be listed on the label.

### Do we need to be careful on cloudy days?

**Yes!** You can get burned on cloudy days without knowing it. Even shade is no guarantee of cover.

### I can't be with my child constantly. Any tips?

There are a few quick lessons you can teach your child.

- » If their shadow is shorter than they are...seek shade. (*It means they are in direct sun.*)
- » Teach your child...SLIP, SLOP and SLAP.
  - SLIP on a shirt.
  - SLOP on the sunscreen.
  - SLAP on a hat.

### At what age can a child be outside on a sunny day?

Check with your child's doctor. However, the rule of thumb is to keep all children age 6 months and under out of the sun.

### How do I know if my child is allergic to the sun?

Allergic responses can occur with only brief time in the sun. Bumps, hives, blisters or red blotchy areas are signals. Check with your child's doctor.

### What kind of clothing should my child wear?

Loose-fitting clothes in tightly knit fabrics are best for blocking out the sun's rays.

