



Protecting Children from the Sun

Children do not need to be at the beach, pool or on vacation to get too much sun. Children should be protected from the sun's harmful (UV) rays whenever they are outdoors.

- **Shade:** The Sun's most harmful UV rays are midday, try to plan indoor activities during this time. If this cannot be avoided, find shade under a tree, an umbrella, or a pop up tent. These options should not be used to seek relief from sunburn but rather to prevent sunburn.
- **Cover Up:** Dress your children in long sleeved shirts and long pants when possible to help protect them from UV rays. Clothes with tightly woven fabric tend to offer the best protection. Darker colored clothing may offer more protection than lighter colored clothing. Wet clothing offers much less UV protection than dryer clothing.
- **Hats:** Hats can help shade the face, scalp, ears and neck and can give great protection. Baseball caps only protect the face and scalp, be sure to use sunscreen to protect exposed skin.
- **Sunglasses:** Sunglasses protect children's eyes from harmful UV rays. Look for sunglasses that block as close to 100% UVA and UVB rays as possible.
- **Sunscreen:** Use sunscreen with at least SPF 15 and UVA and UVB protection any time children are outside. Apply sunscreen 30 minutes before going outdoors. Don't forget ears, nose, lips and tops of feet. Sunscreen should be reapplied every 1- 1 ½ hours throughout the days especially after swimming and exercising, this includes both waterproof and water-resistant sunscreen as well.
- **Plan Ahead:** Keep sun protection handy in your car, bag or child's backpack.



Follow the directions on the package for babies less than 6 month of age. Products contain different ingredients, if your child's skin reacts badly to one product try another or call your pediatrician. A baby's best protection from sunburn is avoiding the sun and staying in the shade.

Unprotected skin can be damaged by the sun's UV rays in as little as 15 minutes but can take up to 12 hours for the skin to show the full effect of sun exposure.

Children still need protection from UV rays on cool and cloudy days. Clouds do not block UV rays.

Any change in the color of your child's skin after sun exposure whether suntan or sunburn indicates damage from UV rays.