

May/June 2014

SAFETY TIP OF THE MONTH

Fun in the SUN Safely

We all need some sun exposure; it's our primary source of vitamin D, which helps us absorb calcium for stronger, healthier bones. But it doesn't take much time in the sun for most people to get the vitamin D they need, and repeated unprotected exposure to the sun's ultraviolet rays can cause skin damage, eye damage, immune system suppression, and skin cancer. Even people in their twenties can develop skin cancer.

Most kids rack up a lot of their lifetime sun exposure before age 18, so it's important that parents teach their children how to enjoy fun in the sun safely. With the right precautions, you can greatly reduce your child's chance of developing skin cancer.

A sunburn develops when the amount of UV exposure is greater than what can be protected against by the skin's melanin.

Also, not all sunlight is "equal" in UV concentration. The intensity of the sun's rays depends upon the time of year. UV rays are strongest during summer.

With the right precautions, kids can safely play in the sun. Here are the most effective strategies

- Avoid the strongest rays of the day (usually 10am to 4pm.),
- Apply and reapply sunscreen even on cool and cloudy days,
- Cover up,
- Use sunscreen consistently-SPF of 30 or higher,
- apply when out in the sun,
- apply 15-30 minutes before going outside,
- apply generously every 2 hours,
- use waterproof sunscreen if your child will be around water,
- Check medications-some may increase **the child's risk of sunburn.**



Be sure to protect your eyes and skin when having FUN in the SUN!!

If your child gets a sunburn here are some tips to comfort them:

- Have them take a cool bath
- Apply a topical aloe gel product
- Give anti-inflammatory medications
- Keep child in the shade when outside until healed to prevent further burning.

Special Points of Interest

- Generously apply SPF sunscreen at least every two hours.
- Cover up when outside. Babies are especially susceptible to the **sun's rays**
- Give child a cool, (not cold) bath if they have a sunburn.
- Go to <http://kidshealth.org> for more information
- Go to www.cancer.org for more information
- Go to www.sunsafetymalliance.org/ for more information
- Go to www.webmd.com for more information.