



A guide to sun safety this summer

As we embrace the warmer months and the joy of basking in the sunshine, it's crucial to understand the importance of sun safety. With over 13,000 new cases of skin cancer diagnosed in the Republic of Ireland each year and an estimated 86% of malignant melanoma cases being preventable, it's time to get serious about sun protection. [Here's expert advice on how to safeguard your skin from harmful UV rays, reduce your risk of sun damage, and maintain healthy sun exposure practices.](#)



1



Understand the risks of excessive sun exposure

Overexposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays can lead to sunburn, premature ageing, and an increased risk of skin cancer. UV radiation is strongest between 11 am and 3 pm, so be extra cautious during these peak hours. **In the Republic of Ireland, the sun's UV rays are strongest from late March to early October, but sun protection should still be a priority year-round.**

2



Get to know your sunscreen

Sunscreen is essential in preventing sun damage. Choose a broad-spectrum sunscreen that protects against both UVA and UVB rays with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30. Apply generously and reapply every two hours, or more often if you're swimming or sweating. **Don't forget to protect your lips with an SPF lip balm and ensure your sunscreen hasn't expired – most sunscreens have a shelf life of two to three years.**



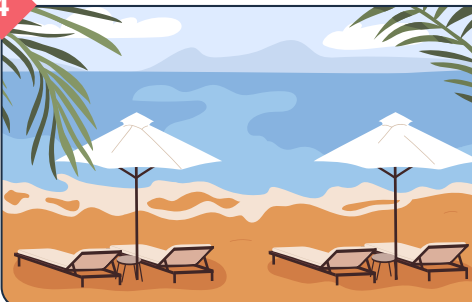
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Embrace protective clothing

Clothing can be your first line of defence against the sun. Opt for long-sleeved shirts, long trousers, and wide-brimmed hats made from tightly woven fabric to shield your skin from UV rays. Look for clothing with a UPF (Ultraviolet Protection Factor) rating for added protection. **Don't forget to protect your eyes with sunglasses that block 100% of UVA and UVB rays.**

4



Seek shade

Whenever possible, seek shade under trees, umbrellas, or other sun shelters, especially during peak UV hours. **Keep in mind that UV rays can bounce off surfaces like sand, water, and concrete, so it's essential to use additional sun protection even when in the shade.**



5



Know the signs of sunburn

Recognising the signs of sunburn early on can help you take immediate action to minimise damage. Symptoms of sunburn include red, warm, and painful skin, swelling, and in severe cases, blisters. If you suspect sunburn, move indoors or into the shade, apply a cool compress, and moisturise with aloe vera or other soothing creams.

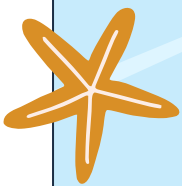


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Practice safe sun exposure

Some sun exposure is necessary for our bodies to produce vitamin D, but it's crucial to strike the right balance. Aim for 10-15 minutes of sun exposure on your face, arms, and legs without sunscreen a few times a week, preferably outside peak UV hours. Keep in mind that individual sun exposure needs may vary based on skin type, age, and other factors, so consult a healthcare professional for personalised advice.



By following these sun safety tips, you'll be well-equipped to enjoy the great outdoors while protecting your skin and overall health. **Make sun safety a priority this summer and all year round.**



Looking for more support and advice on where to go? Contact HealthHero and Validium today.

