

## INFORMATION LEAFLETS FOR PARENTS / CARERS OF A CHILD

### SUN AWARENESS



#### Sun Protection

- Sunny days are to be enjoyed, however we know that extensive or inappropriate exposure to the sun's rays is harmful to the skin.
- Some children are at a high risk for skin cancer i.e. fair skinned children who have had a transplant or are on drugs that weaken the immune system. These children should always apply a very high protection which is designed for children and is 50+ or above in protection factor.
- Children whose skin problems are aggravated by ultraviolet light i.e. Lupus Erythematosus and Vitiligo should be extra vigilant.
- When a child gets sunburn this leads to a greater risk of skin cancer in later life. Skin damage however can be avoided. It is important that children, especially babies and toddlers are protected from the sun as they have sensitive skin which can burn easily.
- Tanned skin is damaged skin

#### Helpful Measures to Minimise Damage from the Sun's Rays include:

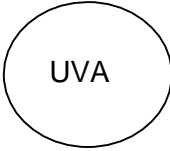
- Minimise sun exposure during peak hours, which is usually between 11am and 3pm, when the sun is strongest. Try to plan your outdoor activities for the early morning or late afternoon.
- Seek shade and/or use an umbrella to protect yourself.
- When it is not possible to stay out of the sun keep yourself well covered. Wear a hat, a hat with a 4 inch brim can reduce UV light to the face by over 70% and ideally long sleeves and trousers.
- Choose tightly woven materials for greater protection from the sun's rays. UV swim suits are particularly useful for young babies and children.  
**Dark clothing blocks more UV rays than light colours.**
- Sun glasses can provide additional protection.

#### Sunscreen products

- Are another useful measure to protect against the sun,
- No sunscreen can give you "complete block" or "100%" protection.
- **Sunscreen products are only as one of many measures to protect against the sun.**
- Apply sunscreens ideally **20** minutes before exposure and reapply every two hours.
- If a product is applied correctly a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30-50 suffices to protect a person with normal skin from sunburn. The correct application of the product is important to ensure the protection indicated on the sunscreen bottle is achieved. **The overall message in relation to sunscreen use is "MORE IS BETTER"**

1. Pay particular attention to ears and lips (lip balm with protection), neck hands and feet, which are frequently forgotten. Sunscreen should be reapplied after swimming, perspiring heavily or towel drying since products differ in their water resistance.
2. Sunscreen products which protect against both UVA and UVB radiation are best (your pharmacist will be able to guide you).

Recent improved labelling will also help identify the sunscreens that have good UVA and UVB protection. UVA rays do not usually cause sunburn however it does cause premature ageing of the skin and skin cancer. We recommend sunscreens with an SPF of 30 or more printed on the label for all ages.

Labelled category	Labelled sun protection factor	Recommended minimum UVA protection factor*
"Low Protection"	"6"	 <p>* If the product meets the recommended minimum UVA protection it will have this symbol on the packaging</p>
	"10"	
"Medium Protection"	"15"	
	"20"	
	"25"	
"High Protection"	"30"	
	"50"	
"Very High Protection"	"50 +"	

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