

SHOULD I USE A SUNBED?

All sunbed users risk damaging their health but some people are at greater risk.

This includes people who:

- have naturally fair skin (many NI people have skin that freckles and burns easily when exposed to the sun)
- are under 35 years of age
- have a large number of moles
- have ever had an abnormal reaction or allergy to light
- are taking certain medications eg some anti-depressants
- have had sun or sunbed exposure within the past 48 hours
- have a history of frequent childhood sunburn
- have been treated for skin cancer or pre-malignant skin lesions
- have sun damaged skin
- are pregnant
- are wearing cosmetics

THE FACTS

Seek the advice of your GP if you notice any mole changes, new moles or abnormal skin changes.

It's against the law for under 18s to use a sunbed on sunbed premises

Sunbed use increases your risk of skin cancer, especially if you first use a sunbed before the age of 35

Using a sunbed is not an effective way to top up Vitamin D levels

THE MYTHS

'A tan is healthy and attractive'

A tan is a sign that your skin is damaged by ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun or sunbeds – it is not healthy. UV rays cause skin cancer and early skin ageing with wrinkling, sagging and yellowish or brown discolouring.

'Using a sunbed will make me look my best for a special event'

Short periods of intense UV exposure on sunbeds can speed up skin damage and skin ageing. Sunbeds can also irritate your skin causing redness, itchiness and dryness and can damage your eyes. Fake tan is an alternative or go with your natural glow.

'I don't want to get sunburned on holiday'

Sunbeds offer very little protection against further skin damage when in the sun. People who burn and don't usually tan in the sun will also burn on a sunbed.

'My gym wouldn't have a sunbed if it wasn't safe'

Because your gym or health club has a sunbed doesn't mean it is safe.

'Sunbed tanning is safer than sun tanning'

Sunbeds do not offer 'safe tanning'. Some sunbeds can give out UV rays many times stronger than the midday summer sun.



WHITBY, COAST & MOORS
PRIMARY CARE NETWORK

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Monthly Newsletter

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Take care in the sun

A tan or sunburn are signs of skin damage and can increase your risk of skin cancer.

Be UV aware and protect your skin.



STAY IN THE SHADE BETWEEN 11AM & 3PM



USE SUN PROTECTION WITH AT LEAST SPF 15 AND UVA 4 STARS



WEAR SUNGLASSES WITH 100% UV PROTECTION



WEAR A BROAD-BRIM HAT



COVER UP

For more information visit careinthesun.org/uv



Cancer Helpline: 0800 783 3339
E: behealthy@cancerfocusni.org
W: www.careinthesun.org

Sunscreen and sun safety

Sunburn increases your risk of skin cancer. Sunburn does not just happen on holiday. You can burn in the UK, even when it's cloudy. There's no safe or healthy way to get a tan. A tan does not protect your skin from the sun's harmful effects. Aim to strike a balance between protecting yourself from the sun and getting enough vitamin D from sunlight.



Sun safety tips

Spend time in the shade when the sun is strongest. In the UK, this is between 11am and 3pm from March to October.

Make sure you:

- **spend time in the shade between 11am and 3pm**
- **make sure you never burn & cover up with suitable clothing and sunglasses**
- **take extra care with children**
- **use at least factor 30 sunscreen**

What factor sunscreen (SPF) should I use?

Do not rely on sunscreen alone to protect yourself from the sun. Wear suitable clothing and spend time in the shade when the sun's at its hottest.

When buying sunscreen, the label should have:

- a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30 to protect against UVB

- at least 4-star UVA protection
UVA protection can also be indicated by the letters "UVA" in a circle, which indicates that it meets the EU standard.
- Make sure the sunscreen is not past its expiry date. Most sunscreens have a shelf life of 2 to 3 years.

Do not spend any longer in the sun than you would without sunscreen.



What are the SPF and star rating?

The sun protection factor, or SPF, is a measure of the amount of ultraviolet B radiation (UVB) protection.

SPFs are rated on a scale of 2 to 50+ based on the level of protection they offer, with 50+ offering the strongest form of UVB protection.

The star rating measures the amount of ultraviolet A radiation (UVA) protection. You should see a star rating of up to 5 stars on UK sunscreens. The higher the star rating, the better.

The letters "UVA" inside a circle is a European marking. This means the UVA protection is at least a third of the SPF value and meets EU recommendations.

Sunscreens that offer both UVA and UVB protection are sometimes called broad spectrum



How to apply sunscreen

Most people do not apply enough sunscreen.

As a guide, adults should aim to apply around:

- .2 teaspoons of sunscreen if you're just covering your head, arms and neck
- 2 tablespoons if you're covering your entire body while wearing a swimming costume
If sunscreen is applied too thinly, the amount of protection it gives is reduced.

- If you're worried you might not be applying enough SPF30, you could use a sunscreen with a higher SPF..

- If you plan to be out in the sun long enough to risk burning, sunscreen needs to be applied twice:



- 30 minutes before going out
- just before going out
Sunscreen should be applied to all exposed skin, including the face, neck and ears, and head if you have thinning or no hair, but a wide-brimmed hat is better.

Sunscreen needs to be reapplied liberally and frequently, and according to the manufacturer's instructions.

This includes applying it straight after you have been in water, even if it's "water resistant", and after towel drying, sweating or when it may have rubbed off.

It's also recommended to reapply sunscreen every 2 hours, as the sun can dry it off your skin.

Swimming and sunscreen

Water washes sunscreen off, and the cooling effect of the water can make you think you're not getting burned. Water also reflects ultraviolet (UV) rays, increasing your exposure.

Use water-resistant sunscreen if it's likely you'll sweat or have contact with water.

Sunscreen should be reapplied straight after you have been in water, even if it's "water resistant", and after towel drying, sweating or when it may have rubbed off.

Children and sun protection

Take extra care to protect babies and children. Their skin is much more sensitive than adult skin, and damage caused by repeated exposure to sunlight could lead to skin cancer developing in later life.

Children aged under 6 months should be kept out of direct strong sunlight.

From March to October in the UK, children should:

- cover up with suitable clothing
- spend time in the shade, particularly from 11am to 3pm
- wear at least SPF30 sunscreen

Apply sunscreen to areas not protected by clothing, such as the face, ears, feet and backs of hands.

To ensure they get enough vitamin D, all [children under 5 are advised to take vitamin D supplements](#).

For more information go to: [Sunscreen and sun safety - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

What if your child gets sunburn?

- Sponge the skin gently with lukewarm water.
- Apply after sun or calamine lotion.
- Give your child plenty to drink.
- If in doubt, seek medical advice.