



## Staying Safe in the Sun Facts Sheet

With summer almost upon us in New Mexico, we can look forward to blue skies and long sunny days. The sun is an important part of our lives providing our bodies with essential Vitamin D. It often has a positive impact on our moods, and makes social and sports events possible. Unfortunately, sun exposure presents risk factors that can lead to skin damage, eye damage and even skin cancer. Most children receive between 50-80% of their lifetime sun exposure before age 18 therefore it is important to be aware of **sun safety**.

Here are some guidelines that offer protection from sun damage:

- ❖ Apply sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher. Fair-skinned people should use a higher SPF. Apply sunscreen 30 minutes before going outside so that a good layer of protection can form. Reapply every 2 hours and more frequently with swimming and strenuous exercise.
- ❖ Choose a “broad spectrum” sunscreen which protects against UVA and UVB rays.
- ❖ Avoid sun exposure during peak hours of 10am-4pm as the sun's rays are the strongest during this time, even on cloudy days. Seek shade when possible.
- ❖ Wear a wide brim hat to protect eyes, ears and head.
- ❖ Wear sunglasses that provide 100% UV protection.
- ❖ Wear lightweight, loose fitting clothing that protects a large area of skin. Tightly woven fabrics are best.

As good role models we can teach our child(ren) **sun safety** that will last a lifetime.

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Sources: American Cancer Society  
Skin Cancer Foundation