

Asheboro Dermatology & Skin Surgery Center

Sun Protection/Sunscreens

Sun damage is a major problem in the U.S. Skin cancer (including Basal Cell Carcinoma, Squamous Cell Carcinoma and Melanoma) is becoming more prevalent every year. Basal Cell Carcinoma is the most common type of cancer in the world. There are also a variety of non-cancerous lesions that are sun induced and other inflammatory disorders (e.g. Lupus, Medication Interactions, Polymorphous Light Eruption) that are caused or worsened by excessive sun exposure. Some of these problems are caused by the cumulative (i.e. total over time) amount of sun that an individual acquires. In general, skin cancer is linked to this type of accumulated sun, although this is not entirely true for melanoma. Other problems can occur from just individual episodes of excessive sun exposure or sunburns. Whatever your situation, judicious sun protection is important, especially in the Southeast U.S. We at *Asheboro Dermatology & Skin Surgery Center* are advocates of sun protection since we often encounter the problems that excessive sun can induce. We offer the following advice.....

General:

- Use extra care when you are outdoors between the hours of 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM. This is especially true in the summer, but you can acquire significant sun even in the winter.
- Remember that you can get sunburned on overcast/cloudy/cold days, even with the relatively less solar radiation.
- You are never too old or too young to sun protect!

Sunscreen:

(NOTE : We do not recommend any name brands exclusively. The listed product lines are simply examples that are proven in our experience to meet the guidelines we promote.)

- For active persons who enjoy sports (e.g. golf, tennis, swimming) or have jobs that require considerable time outdoors, we recommend *SWEAT AND WATER PROOF* options. *There is a big difference between just “water proof” and “sweat proof”!* Such products include Coppertone Sport, Bullfrog, Blue Lizard and certain Neutrogena and Aveeno products. The SPF (Sun Protection Factor) should be at least 30. Every product should block UVA and UVB rays.
- For casual use (for those not likely to sweat very much), there are some excellent lines out there. Aveeno and Neutrogena (among others) provide terrific products that are user friendly and “elegant” (smoother application).
- For those with “sensitive skin”, make sure you choose sunscreen accordingly. Many sunscreen ingredients can be harsh for sensitive skin patients. You may need to explore several alternatives to find one that truly agrees with your skin type.

The most important factor is to be consistent and apply “balance” to your sun exposure. Keeping excessive sun accumulation to a minimum over time will help you in the long run in the prevention of skin cancer, “aging” and general sun damage.