

Professional Practice Support

SUN SENSIBLE

A fact that you cannot ignore is that Australia has the **highest** rate of skin cancer in the world.

Following are some statistics that should really raise our awareness of just how **dangerous** the sun is if you are not sensible

- every second person will have a form of skin cancer in their lives
- over 1500 people in Australia die each year from skin cancer
- over 370,000 people develop non-melanoma skin cancers annually in Australia
- over 8500 Australians develop melanomas annually.

No matter what type of colour of skin you have, **Ultra Violet (UV)** radiation from the sun can cause serious damage. This is particularly true up to the age of 15 years.

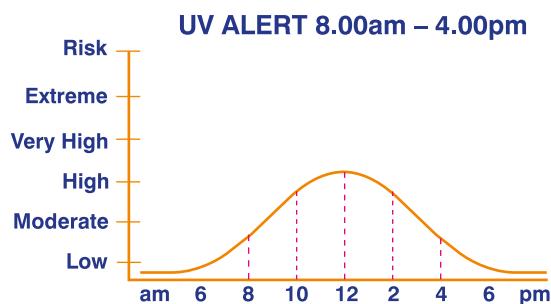
Skin cancers can develop from exposure to

- direct sunlight
- indirect and reflected light from water, snow etc.

UV radiation penetrates deep into the layers of your skin damaging the cells

- the long term results include wrinkles, rough and blotchy skin.

There is a sun smart UV Alert tool that can be used to make us aware when UV radiation is at its worst.



Sensible sun smart messages that **protect** your skin include

- wear protective clothing that covers as much skin as possible, such as, long sleeved collared tops, $\frac{3}{4}$ pants
- use SPF 30+ sunscreen 20 minutes before going outside and reapply every 2 hours
- use at least a teaspoon of sunscreen on each arm, leg, front and back and $\frac{1}{2}$ a teaspoon on face and ears
- if exercising and perspiring apply sunscreen at shorter time intervals than 2 hours
- wear a broadbrimmed, bucket or legionaire hat when outside. Baseball caps offer little protection for your ears and neck
- wear sunglasses to protect your eyes from UV radiation
- when outside spend the majority of time in the shade
- on overcast days the threat of UV radiation is still very high.

Many people mistakenly believe that if they don't get red from sunburn, then the sun has not damaged their skin. UV radiation is **ever** present and a danger to your skin.

When selecting a **sunscreen** to use, it is important to realise that

- not all sunscreens are made from the same ingredients
- you should choose one that suits your skin
- if unsure speak to a chemist.

Also, different clothing has differing protection from the sun, called the Ultra – Violet Protection Factor (UPF)

- it depends on the material the garment is made from.
- not all clothing has a UPF rating, but of those that do, anything above UPF 30 offers good protection from UV radiation
- darker colours usually offer greater protection
- denser weaves of cloth also protect better.

Thanks to the Cancer Council Victoria

- for more information look at www.sunsmart.com.au