

Sunscreen + Sun Protection

No single method can protect you perfectly. The best path is to adopt as many sun safety steps as possible, and make them daily habits everywhere you go, all year long.

- ☒ **Wear sunscreen** with SPF 30 or higher.
- ☒ **Cover up** with UPF clothing, wide-brimmed hats, and UV-blocking sunglasses.
- ☒ **Seek shade**, especially between 10am and 2pm when the sun's UV rays are strongest.

Source: Skin Cancer Foundation, 2025

THE University of Vermont CANCER CENTER

ABOUT US

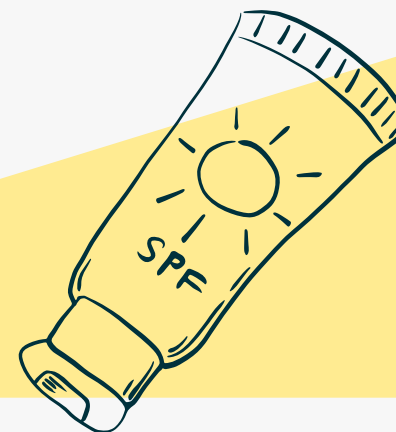
The University of Vermont Cancer Center was founded in 1974. Our mission is to reduce the cancer burden in Vermont, northeastern New York and across northern New England, through research, outstanding clinical care, community outreach, and education.



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ALL ABOUT Sunscreen



DID YOU KNOW?

Having 5 or more sunburns **doubles** your risk for melanoma.



The good news?
Using sunscreen and other sun safety strategies reduces your skin cancer risk.

Sunscreen Basics

WHO? Everyone under the sun!*

WHAT? Broad spectrum SPF 30 or higher.

WHEN? Every day.
Reapply every 2 hours.

WHERE? All sun exposed skin.

WHY? Reduce your risk of skin damage and skin cancer!



DID YOU KNOW?

Even on cloudy days, up to **80%** of the sun's UV radiation reaches the earth. Sun protection is important every day!

*Babies under 6 months are the only exception. Staying out of the sun and using shade and sun-protective clothing are the best way to protect infants from UV exposure.

What does SPF mean?

SPF stands for **Sun Protection Factor**. The number tells you how long the sun's UVB rays would take to burn your skin if you apply the sunscreen exactly as directed compared with the amount of time without sunscreen. So, if you use an SPF 30 product properly, it would take you 30 times longer to burn than if you used no sunscreen.

Choosing Sunscreen: What to Look For

Broad spectrum: Protects your skin from both UVA and UVB rays.

SPF 30: Ideal for every day, occasional exposure, like walking your dog, or driving to work.

SPF 50 or higher: Necessary for extended outdoor activities, including if you work outdoors.

Water resistant or very water resistant: For swimming or intense exercise.

No matter the SPF, reapplication every two hours is key!

DID YOU KNOW?

Vermont has one of the **highest** incidence rates of **melanoma** in the country.



Inorganic v. Organic Sunscreen

Sunscreen includes active ingredients that help prevent the sun's UV radiation from reaching your skin. **Here's how the two types of sunscreen work:**

Inorganic (mineral) sunscreen ingredients (including titanium dioxide and zinc oxide) reflect and scatter the rays (like a shield) before they penetrate your skin.

Organic (chemical) sunscreen ingredients (like avobenzone and octisalate) absorb UV rays (like a sponge) before they can damage your skin.

Ingredients

Favorites: Zinc oxide, Titanium dioxide

Acceptable: Cinoxate, Dioxybenzone, Ensulizole, Homosalate, Meradimate, Octinoxate, Octisalate, Octocrylene, Padimate O, Sulisobenzene, Oxybenzone, Avobenzone

Not Acceptable: Aminobenzoic acid, Trolamine salicylate