



Fact Sheet 3

Sun Health Information

Skin cancer is now the UK's most common form of cancer and doctors have suggested that most cases could have been prevented simply by reducing exposure.

A sun tan might look good but it is also a symptom of skin trying to protect itself from further damage. Since babies and younger children have thinner skins and less of the protective melanin pigment, they are at a higher risk of incurring skin damage from the sun and it is vitally important that they are not allowed to burn.

Whenever possible, but especially at the hottest times of the day (11am to 3pm), children should wear sun protective clothing including coverage around the neck and, ideally, a wide brimmed hat. A high factor broad-spectrum sun cream (Sun Protection Factor 15 as a minimum) should be used on any skin that is not protected by clothing. Sun creams should normally be applied 30 minutes before exposure and reapplied every few hours and after swimming, or as according to the manufacturer's guidelines. The UK Department of Health advocates caution in applying sun cream chemicals to a baby's sensitive skin.

Normal clothing offers some sun protection, but this varies according to the type and colour of the material. A fabric's composition, its weight and tightness of weave all help to determine its Ultraviolet Protection Factor ("UPF") rating, but unless the fabric has been tested, you cannot know what standard of protection is being provided. Wet clothing permits more UV light to reach your skin - for example, the level of protection offered by a normal T-shirt can be halved when wet.

Sun protective clothing with a tested UPF of 50+ (the maximum rating for fabrics) will block around 98% of the sun's ultraviolet radiation when new. As stretching opens the fabric's weave and reduces its UPF, it is important that the swimwear be appropriately sized and not tight.

The Beach Factory's range of UV protective swimwear offers a certified UPF 50+ protection for babies, children and adults.

Remember!

The sun can still burn even when the weather is cloudy, or cold, or windy. You don't have to feel hot!

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UV light is reflected off water and sand and so simply shading from the direct sun may not be sufficient to prevent burning.

UV swimwear can only protect those parts of the body that are covered. Sun creams must also be applied to exposed areas.

Think "S.M.A.R.T."

- **S**tay in the shade 11am-3pm
- **M**ake sure you never burn
- **A**lways cover up
- **R**emember to take extra care with children
- **T**hen use factor 15+ sunscreen

Information written and supplied by The Beach Factory – www.beachfactory.co.uk

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