

Sunbathing and long exposure to the sun can cause skin cancer. Malignant melanoma is now the most common cancer in the UK today. It is the third most common cancer amongst young people aged between 15 and 24. It is never safe to allow your skin to burn in the pursuit of getting a tan. Any burning to the skin, however minor it may seem at the time, can result in serious skin cancer.

Sun safety tips:

- wear a hat, sunglasses and loose fitting but tightly woven clothes
- avoid the sun between 11am and 3pm;
- use a suitable sunscreen suitable, it is recommended that we use factor 15+;
- Take care not to burn.

Skin cancer facts:

- Skin cancer is the second most common cancer in the UK
- The number of new cases has doubled in the past 20 years
- Ultraviolet radiation (the cause of skin cancer) is reflected off certain surfaces including water, sand and snow
- You can still burn if the weather is cloudy or if you are in shallow water - protect yourself when swimming
- Brown or black skinned people rarely get skin cancer but you should still take care in hot sun not over expose your skin
- The sun causes a thickening of the skin which leads to premature ageing and wrinkles.

## Choosing the right sun screen

Sun screen is graded according to its sun protection factor (SPF).

- if you burn easily and tan with difficulty then use SPF 15+;
- if you tan easily but sometimes burn use SPF 10+;
- if you tan easily use SPF 8+;
- if your skin is naturally brown or black use SPF 6+.

## Sunbed safety

Using sunbeds can also cause skin cancers. Sunbeds are dangerous because of the UVA radiation they produce. It was previously thought that UVA radiation was safe (UVA is what sunbeds give out which brown your skin). Now there is evidence that UVA can contribute to cancer in some people, particularly for people who use them frequently.

**S**pend time in the shade between 11 and 3

**M**ake sure you never burn

**A**im to cover up with a t-shirt, hat and sunglasses

**R**emember children burn more easily

**T**hen use factor 15+ sunscreen.