

## WHAT CAUSES SKIN CANCER?

Skin cancer is most often caused by ultraviolet (UV) light from the sun, or sunbeds. Here are some of the factors that can affect your child's risk of developing skin cancer later in life:

### Sunbathing and unprotected sun exposure

Time spent in direct sunlight, at midday, without protection through shade, clothes or sunscreen can damage the skin.

### Lack of sun protection

Proper sun protection helps to minimise the damage from UV rays, but 35% of parents rarely or never give their child protective clothing when exposed to the sun.<sup>3</sup>

### Sunbed use

One sunbed session before the age of 35 can increase the risk of skin cancer by almost 60%.<sup>4</sup> Yet sunbed use has increased from 11% to 14% over the last ten years.<sup>5</sup>

### Sunburn

Every sunburn adds to the damage of your skin DNA. This can accumulate and lead to cancer later in life.



## THINGS TO REMEMBER

**i** One blistering sunburn doubles the risk of skin cancer in adulthood<sup>2</sup>



**i** 25% of lifetime sun exposure occurs before age 18<sup>2</sup>



**i** Children are exposed to UV rays whenever they are outside – the sun doesn't just shine on the beach



**i** Check the day's UV level and protect your child's skin appropriately:



**Stay in the shade** – particularly between 10:00am and 4:00pm



**Wear protective clothing** – it should cover their skin while keeping them cool



**Shade the face and neck with a hat** – those with material flaps at the back are best



**Use sunscreen regularly** – choose SPF50+, with UVA and UVB protection, and reapply at least every 2 hours

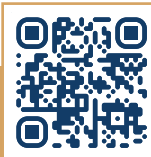


**i** Teach them sun safety – create positive habits now that last a lifetime



<sup>1</sup> Global Cancer Observatory  
<sup>2</sup> Skin Cancer Foundation  
<sup>3</sup> Sun exposure and risks associated, La Roche Posay and Ipsos, 2021  
<sup>4</sup> Irish Cancer Society  
<sup>5</sup> Euromelanoma clinical database  
<sup>6</sup> Cancer Research UK  
<sup>7</sup> La Roche Posay/IPSOS Skin Cancer Prevention study, 2015

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# PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE BY PROTECTING THEIR SKIN TODAY



**SKIN CANCER CASES ARE  
EXPECTED TO INCREASE BY  
40% IN THE NEXT 25 YEARS.<sup>1</sup>**

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## SUNBURN IS AVOIDABLE

**Just one blistering sunburn in childhood more than doubles the risk of skin cancer in adulthood.<sup>2</sup>**

Yet 35% of parents rarely give their child protective clothing when exposed to the sun.<sup>3</sup>

Children are exposed to UV rays whenever they're outside - in the park, in the playground, in the garden.

By protecting our children's skin now, we can put the brakes on skin cancer increases and safeguard the next generation's future.

**LEARN HOW TO PROTECT THEIR  
SKIN SO THEY CAN ENJOY THE  
OUTDOORS SAFELY.**



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## PREVENTING SKIN CANCER

### Know their skin type

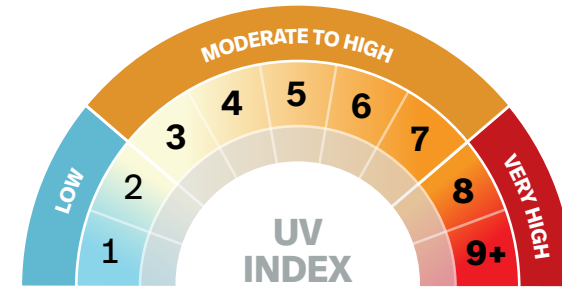
The skin is typically classed in six different types, based on how it reacts when exposed to the sun:

<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fair skin, often with freckles</li> <li>Always burns and does not tan</li> </ul>	
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fair skin, a little darker than type 1</li> <li>Tans slowly and prone to sunburn</li> </ul>	
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Slightly darker complexion</li> <li>Tans easily and quickly</li> </ul>	
<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Light brown skin</li> <li>Tans quickly and unlikely to sunburn</li> </ul>	
<b>5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dark brown skin</li> <li>Tans very easily and strongly resistant to burning</li> </ul>	
<b>6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very dark brown to black skin</li> <li>Almost never burns and deeply pigmented</li> </ul>	



### Understand and check UV levels

You can check the 'UV index' to find out the current UV levels, where you live.



Levels 3 – 7	Levels 8 or above
Use sun protection	Use sun protection and, if fair skinned, stay in the shade. <b>!</b>

**i** **Note:** Children with increased sun sensitivity (e.g. from a medical condition, medication or immunosuppressive treatment) or with a genetic pre-disposition to skin cancer should always use sun protection, regardless of skin colour.

The strength of UV rays changes throughout the year and from country to country. Some countries (those near the equator) will experience strong UV rays all year.

**i** **You can check the UV levels where you live using a weather app, or on meteorological websites.**

### Protect their skin

Children's skin is more sensitive than adults', so take extra care to protect them from the sun.

#### Stay in the shade

Babies under 12 months should stay out of direct, strong sunlight, particularly between 10:00am and 4:00pm, when the sun is strongest.



If your baby needs to be outside or in a car, use sun protection including a hat and protective clothing and a UV shade on car windows or over buggies. Older children should also spend time in the shade, especially when the sun is at its strongest.



#### Choose protective clothing

Babies and children can easily overheat, so staying in the shade is best. If your child is in the sun, dress them in lightweight, loose-fitting clothing that covers the skin, while keeping them cool.

Hats that shade the face, ears and neck will also help to protect them from the sun. Hats with a material flap at the back do this better than baseball caps. You can also buy children's swimwear with UV protection – check the 'UPF' (Ultraviolet Protection Factor). Always remember to re-apply sunscreen after swimming.



#### Use sunscreen regularly

Children should wear a minimum of SPF50+ sunscreen when outdoors. Choose a sunscreen that offers both UVA and UVB protection. Follow the instructions on the bottle but generally this should be applied 30 minutes before going outside and re-applied a minimum of every two hours.

Apply sunscreen to areas of the body not protected by clothing, such as the face, ears, neck, arms, hands, legs and feet. Make sure you always re-apply after swimming or getting wet, even if the product is 'water resistant'.

### Check medication

Certain medications increase sensitivity to UV rays. Ask your doctor or pharmacist whether your child's medication increases sun sensitivity and if so, take extra precautions to protect their skin.



**i** **Note:** It's advised that all children under five are given vitamin D supplements to ensure they get enough of the nutrient.

### Avoid tanning and sunbeds

57% of teenagers think a tan is attractive<sup>7</sup> but exposure to UV rays from sunbathing and sunbeds can increase the risk of skin cancer<sup>6</sup> and cause photoaging.<sup>2</sup> Make sure they understand the dangers of UV tanning, both to their health and appearance. If they still want a tan, suggest fake tanning products instead. Remind them to use sun protection – fake tan doesn't protect the skin.



### Teach them sun safety

A study has shown that over half of adolescents don't always apply sunscreen to their face, when in the sun.<sup>7</sup> Making sun protection a normal part of their routine early will teach them to look after their own skin as they get older.

**i** **Note:** Make sure any caregivers, such as nurseries, childminders or school are following the same rules as you. Provide sunscreen and protective clothing and check that they have areas of shade available during break times.