



# The Sun Bus

# Skin Savvy Monthly

## December 2025

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Your monthly guide to sun safety, expert skin health insights, and the latest updates from The Sun Bus's community outreach initiatives.

### New Year, New Habit, New You: Daily Sunscreen Use

By Sydney Ambrose, MS3

Here's a New Year's resolution to start the new year strong: wear sunscreen daily!

Many think winter means less risk, but you can still get UV damage during colder months. Use **SPF 30+** daily, reapply often, and store sunscreen by your toothbrush as a reminder.<sup>1</sup>



### Moisturizer + SPF: Your Cold-Weather Duo

By Keana Khodadad, Pre-Doctoral Research Fellow



Your skin still needs protection in the winter! Start by applying a good moisturizer to combat dryness, then apply SPF on top to shield against year-round UV. Together, they keep your skin comfortable, hydrated, and healthy all season long.<sup>2</sup>

### The Reflection Effect: How Snow and Ice Magnify UV Exposure

By Jonique Depina, MS3

The winter season not only brings seasonal cheer but also increased UV exposure. UV rays reflect off snow and ice, doubling your UV exposure.<sup>3</sup>

While you're out enjoying your favorite winter activity, make sure to wear **SPF 30** or higher!<sup>4</sup>



Abbreviations: **MS** = Medical Student, **OMS** = Osteopathic Medical Student, **SPF** = Sun Protective Factor, **UV** = Ultraviolet Radiation

References: 1. American Academy of Dermatology (2024). *American Academy of Dermatology Survey Shows Sun Protection Lacking in Winter*. 2. American Academy of Dermatology (2021). *Your Winter skin survival kit*. 3. Foundation, Skin Cancer (2025). *Even Snow Days Are Sun Days*. 4. American Academy of Dermatology Association (2021). *Why you need sun protection in the winter*.



# MERKEL CELL CARCINOMA: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

By Vy Bui, MS1

Merkel cell carcinoma (MCC) is a rare, fast-growing skin cancer with high risk of spreading.<sup>5</sup>



## What it looks like:

Firm, usually painless, red or purple bump that grows quickly, often on the face, neck, or arms but can appear anywhere.<sup>5</sup>



## Risk factors:

Sun exposure, light skin, age over 50, weakened immune system.<sup>6</sup>



## What to do:

See a dermatologist promptly!

Early biopsy and treatment greatly improve outcomes.<sup>6</sup>



Merkel cell carcinoma

## Research Article of the Month: *Can Vitamin B3 Protect Against Skin Cancer?*

By Monica Ziogaite, MS4

A new study of over 33,000 veterans found that taking nicotinamide, an oral daily supplement form of vitamin B3, lowered nonmelanoma skin cancer risk by 14%.<sup>7</sup>

**14% ↓** Non-melanoma  
Skin cancer

**54% ↓** After the **first**  
skin cancer

### What is the biggest benefit?

A **54% lower risk** of subsequent skin cancers, especially Squamous Cell Carcinoma, when started after the first diagnosis.<sup>7</sup>

## Driving Change One Stop At A Time: *The 2025 Sun Bus Story*

By Stephanie Ezeoke, MS2

**2,041**

Skin Checks

**351**

Pre-cancers  
(Actinic Keratosis)

**176**

Suspected non-melanoma  
Skin Cancers

**31**

Suspected Melanomas

In 2025, The Sun Bus visited 12 states, attended 57 events, reached more than 130,000 skin health seekers, and referred 36% of screened individuals to dermatology care.

**Every stop advanced early detection, empowered communities, and moved us toward a brighter more equitable future in skin health**

Abbreviations: MS = Medical Student, MCC = Merkel Cell Carcinoma.

References: 5. The Skin Cancer Foundation (2023). Merkel Cell Carcinoma Overview. 6. Tribble JT, Pfeiffer RM, Brownell I, et al. (2025). Merkel Cell Carcinoma and Immunosuppression, UV Radiation, and Merkel Cell Polyomavirus. *JAMA Dermatology*. 7. Breglio KF, Knox KM, Hwang J, et al. (2025). Nicotinamide for skin cancer chemoprevention. *JAMA Dermatology*.