



# 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*.