



The Sun Bus

Skin Savvy Monthly

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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.

What SPF Do I Need?

By Margaret "Meg" Mercante, MS4

For everyday protection, choose a **broad-spectrum SPF 30 or higher**. If you will be swimming or sweating, make it water-resistant. SPF 30 blocks about 97% of UVB rays and SPF 50 about 98%, but a higher SPF does not last longer or replace generous application. **Apply sunscreen 15 minutes before going outdoors, reapply every two hours** and after swimming or sweating, and pair it with shade and sun-protective clothing.¹

Protecting Your Scalp from UV Damage

By Nadine Belony, OMS II



There is a common misconception that your scalp doesn't need protection from the sun. However, your scalp is skin, too, and can be damaged by UV radiation.

When spending time outdoors, consider protection strategies such as wearing a **wide-brimmed hat** that provides adequate shade for your entire head.¹

Kiss the Sun Goodbye, Seal It with SPF

By Vy Bui, MS2

Lips have a thin protective layer, minimal melanin, and constant sun exposure, making them especially vulnerable to UV damage, premature aging, and lip cancer.³ Protect them with a **broad-spectrum SPF 30+ lip balm, reapplying every 2 hours and after eating or drinking**. Don't let your lips go unprotected.



Abbreviations: MD = Doctor of Medicine, MS = Medical Student or Master of Science, OMS = Osteopathic Medical Student, DO = Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, UV = Ultraviolet Radiation, SPF = Sun Protective Factor.
References: 1. Ugoh GA, Lim HW. (2026). Sun Protection 101-Your Guide to Sunscreen. *JAMA Dermatol*. 2. US Department of Health and Human Services. (2014). The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent Skin Cancer. Washington (DC): Office of the Surgeon General (US). 3. Xiong, Lidan, He, Hailun, Tang, Jie, Yang, Qi, Li, Li. (2022). Self-Assembly of Cellulose Nanocrystals and Organic Colored Pigments as Reinforcement Matrix of Lipstick for Enhancing SPF. *Oxidative Medicine and Cellular Longevity*.



Actually, it could be actinic keratosis!

These are common if you have been exposed to too much sun over the years. However, it is treatable, especially when caught early. Protect your skin with sunscreen, hats, and regular skin checks with your dermatologist!¹

Phototherapy: When Dermatologists Prescribe UV Light

By Rachna Vipparla, MS1

Prescribed UV light by your dermatologist? Here's how it helps your skin. UV light safely penetrates the skin and helps reduce intense itching, decrease skin inflammation, calm an overreactive immune response, or slow rapidly growing skin cells. It's even very effective in treating conditions such as psoriasis and eczema!²



Sun Safety & Psoriasis: Finding the Right Balance

By Lola Oladinni, DO, MEd

- ☀️ Some sunlight may improve psoriasis, but avoid sunburn, as it can trigger flares.³
- ☀️ Use a broad-spectrum SPF of 30+ on unaffected skin when outdoors.⁴
- ☀️ Don't use tanning beds! They're not a safe psoriasis treatment.⁵
- ☀️ Medical UVB phototherapy is safer and more effective than natural sun exposure.⁶



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References: 1. Thamam JR, Welzel J, Schuh S. (2024). Diagnosis and therapy of actinic keratosis. *J Dtsch Dermatol Ges.* 2. American Academy of Dermatology Association. Psoriasis treatment: Phototherapy. AADA. 3. Lapolla W et al. (2011). A review of phototherapy protocols for psoriasis treatment. *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology.* 4. American Academy of Dermatology Association. (2026). Are triggers causing your psoriasis flare-ups? *American Academy of Dermatology Association.* 5. American Academy of Dermatology Association. (2026). Psoriasis treatment: Phototherapy. *American Academy of Dermatology Association.* 6. Li Y et al. (2022). Assessment of efficacy and safety of UV-based therapy for psoriasis: a network meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials. *Annals of Medicine.*