

WNM YEARLY FUN IN THE SUN ISSUE!!!

It appears that summer will be here early this year, and there is a lot of hubbub going on about sun care, sunscreen and vitamin D. What's safe, what's not? What protects against skin cancer? There is a lot of information out there and I hope I can dispel some of the myths out there and point you toward some excellent resources for further information as well. So let's go!

EWG.ORG– YOUR FRIEND AND MINE

[The Environmental Working Group](http://www.environmentalworkinggroup.org) is a watchdog organization that has no political or financial ties to anyone. Hence, they can tell you the truth and not worry about it! Go to their site often for the truth about safe products for

you and your family. What follows are highlights from their recent exposure on sunscreens and sun safety.

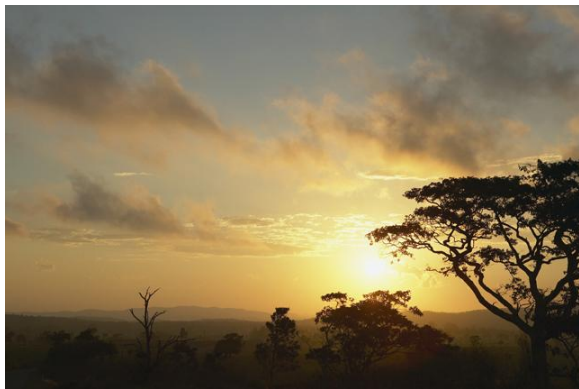
Did you know that sunscreens were created to protect our military against severe sunburns? They were not, on the other hand, created to protect against skin cancers. Here are some quick skin cancer tidbits from the EWG articles:

- Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the US, accounting for almost ½ of all cases each year.
- Even though sunscreen products are improving and more people are wearing them, skin cancer rates continue to rise each year.
- Skin cancer rates in the US can be broken down into 3 types: squamous cell (16%), basal cell (80%) and melanoma (4%). Of the three types, sunscreen use has been shown to reduce the rates of only squamous cell types.
- The International Agency for Research on Cancer concludes that sunscreen has no effect on basal cell cancers.
- Studies are conflicting regarding the effect of sunscreens on melanoma.

So what do we do with this information?
Read on.

UVA AND UVB

Most of us know that UVB rays burn, UVA rays age us. Most sunscreens protect against UVB rays, allowing us to stay in the sun longer without burning. The real problem lies in the fact that UVA rays penetrate deeper, causing more cellular damage than the obvious effects of burning UVBs. It is the UVA rays that are linked to melanoma. Today's sunscreens are more likely to protect against both rays, but not as well as the companies' tout!



Further more, there is still confusion about the use of sunscreen at all!

- FDA is not aware of data demonstrating that sunscreen use alone helps prevent skin cancer." – U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), 2007
- "Sunscreens were never developed to prevent skin cancer.

In fact, there is no evidence to recommend that sunscreens prevent skin cancer in humans."
— Zoe Diana Draelos, editor of Journal of Cosmetic Dermatology, 2010

- "It is not known if protecting skin from sunlight and other UV radiation decreases the risk of skin cancer. It is not known if non-melanoma skin cancer risk is decreased by staying out of the sun, using sunscreens, or wearing long sleeve shirts, long pants, sun hats and sunglasses when outdoors." – National Cancer Institute, 2009

This is getting scary, isn't it?? This is where I defer to the findings of the EWG to set us straight with the facts. Here are highlights from their articles database which I highly recommend you explore in your free time.

SOME EVIDENCE SUGGESTS THAT SUNSCREEN CAN INCREASE RATE OF MELANOMA IN SOME PEOPLE

Some researchers have detected an increased risk of melanoma among sunscreen users. No one knows the cause, but scientists speculate that sunscreen users stay out in the sun longer and absorb more radiation overall, or that free radicals released as sunscreen chemicals break down in sunlight may play a role. One other hunch: Inferior sunscreens with poor UVA protection that have dominated the

market for 30 years may have led to this surprising outcome. All major public health agencies still advise using sunscreens, but they also stress the importance of shade, clothing and timing

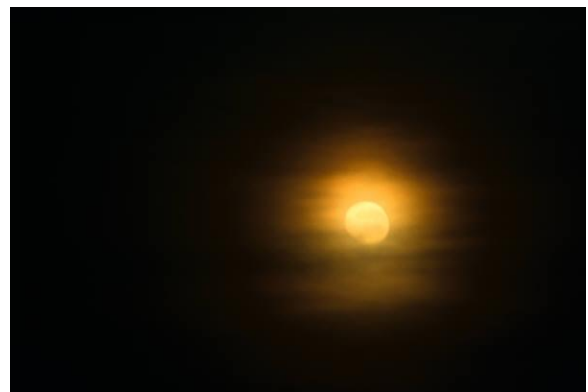
HIGHER SPF NOT NECESSARILY BETTER

- In 2007 the FDA published draft regulations that would prohibit companies from labeling sunscreens with an SPF (sun protection factor) higher than "SPF 50+." The agency wrote that higher values were "inherently misleading," given that "there is no assurance that the specific values themselves are in fact truthful..." (FDA 2007). Scientists are also worried that high-SPF products may tempt people to stay in the sun too long, suppressing sunburns (a late, key warning of overexposure) while upping the risks of other kinds of skin damage.

VITAMIN D LEVELS ARE PLUMMETING

- Adding to the confusion is the fact that sunshine serves a critical function in the body that sunscreen appears to inhibit — production of vitamin D. The main source of vitamin D in the body is sunshine, and the compound

is enormously important to health – it strengthens bones and the immune system, reduces the risk of various cancers (including breast, colon, kidney, and ovarian cancers) and regulates at least 1,000 different genes governing virtually every tissue in the body (Mead 2008). Over the last two decades, vitamin D levels in the U.S. population have been decreasing steadily, creating a "growing epidemic of vitamin D insufficiency" (Ginde 2009a). Seven of every 10 U.S. children now have low levels. Those most likely to be deficient include children who are obese or who spend more than four hours daily in front of the TV, computer or video games.



COMMON INGREDIENT, VITAMIN A, INCREASES CANCER

- Recently available data from an FDA study indicate that a

form of vitamin A, retinyl palmitate, when applied to the skin in the presence of sunlight, may speed the development of skin tumors and lesions (NTP 2009). This evidence is troubling because the sunscreen industry adds vitamin A to 30 percent of all sunscreens.

The industry puts vitamin A in its formulations because it is an anti-oxidant that slows skin aging. That may be true for lotions and night creams used indoors, but FDA recently conducted a study of vitamin A's photocarcinogenic properties, the possibility that it results in cancerous tumors when used on skin exposed to sunlight. Scientists have known for some time that vitamin A can spur excess skin growth (hyperplasia), and that in sunlight it can form free radicals that damage DNA.

It's an ironic twist for an industry already battling studies on whether their products protect against skin cancer. The FDA data are preliminary, but if they hold up in the final assessment, the sunscreen industry has a big problem. In the meantime, EWG recommends that consumers avoid sunscreens with vitamin A (look for "retinyl palmitate" or "retinol" on the label).

FREE RADICALS AND OTHER DANGEROUS INGREDIENTS

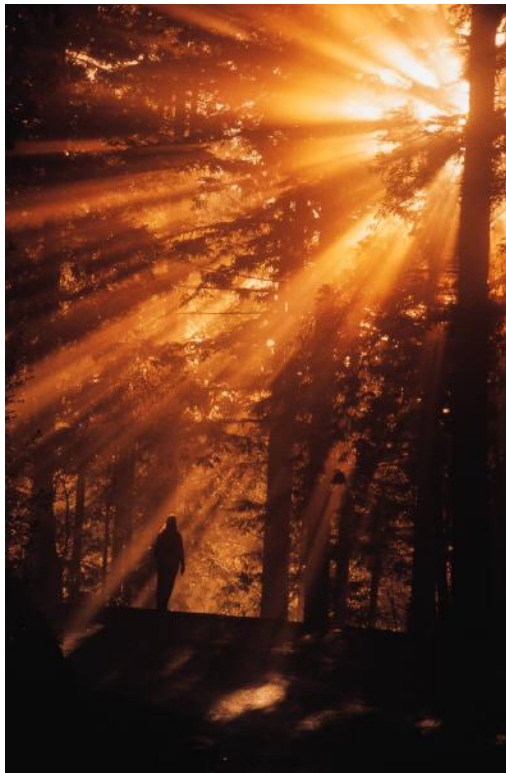
Both UV radiation and many common sunscreen ingredients generate free radicals that damage DNA and skin cells, accelerate skin aging and cause skin cancer. An effective sunscreen prevents more damage than it causes, but sunscreens are far better at preventing sunburn than at limiting free radical damage. When consumers apply too little sunscreen or reapply it infrequently, behaviors that are more common than not, sunscreens can cause more free radical damage than UV rays on bare skin

After reviewing the evidence, EWG determined that mineral sunscreens have the best safety profile of today's choices. They are stable in sunlight and do not appear to penetrate the skin. They offer UVA protection, which is sorely lacking in most of today's sunscreen products. For consumers who don't like mineral products, we recommend sunscreens with avobenzene (3 percent for the best UVA protection) and without the notorious hormone disruptors oxybenzone or 4-MBC. Scientists have called for parents to avoid using oxybenzone on children due to penetration and toxicity concerns

FDA STILL NOT PROTECTING US!

In the United States, consumer protection has stalled because of the FDA's 33-year effort to set enforceable guidelines for consumer protection. EWG has found a number of serious problems with existing sunscreens, including overstated claims about their performance and inadequate UVA

protection. Many of these will be remedied if and when the FDA's proposed sunscreen rule takes effect. But even after the rule is enacted, gaps will remain. FDA does not consider serious toxicity concerns such as hormone disruption when approving new sun filters. The new rules would also still allow sunscreen makers to use ingredients like vitamin A that can damage the skin in sunlight, and would fail to require makers to measure sunscreen stability despite ample evidence that many products break down quickly in sunlight.

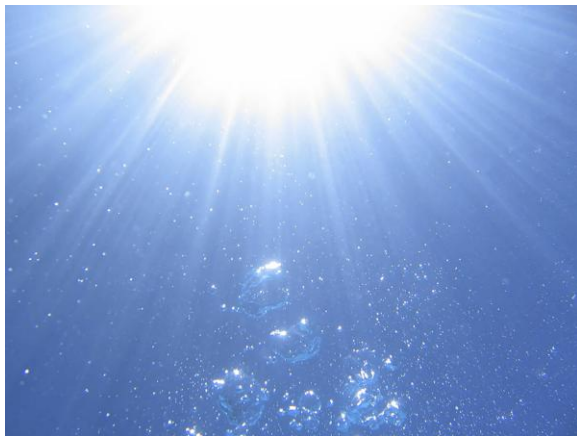


MY SUMMARY

I know this is a lot of information, but you need to know the facts about a topic that impacts your entire family. Every doctor proclaims the value of wearing sunscreen every day all day. You need to know the facts, the details and the how-to's to choose the product that is best for you. Here is what I suggest you do with all this information:

- Read more. Go to <http://www.ewg.org> and read the full articles.
- Spend 10–20 minutes in the sun most days of the week without sunscreen to get some vitamin D. Know your vitamin D level!!
- Choose a mineral sunblock which protects against all UV rays. These include titanium dioxide and zinc oxide.
- Apply it thoroughly and often.
- Befriend a fashionable sun hat!
- Wear sunglasses always to protect your retinas. Train your kids early to wear funky hats and sunglasses.
- Take additional antioxidant vitamins to protect your skin from the inside out.

- Use after-sun products that contain nourishing antioxidants, aloe and natural oils to replenish and rehydrate what the sun has depleted.
- Compare sunscreens on the EWG site. They list and rate them all according to protection and ingredient safety. They also compare sun protection in makeup and baby products as well.



What am I wearing these days?

- I wear [Mychelle](#) sunscreen for faces which is wonderful and organic to boot!
- I really like the Bare Escentuals mineral makeup which has an SPF 15 naturally in it.
- Burt's Bees has a wonderful product line, including their

mineral sunscreen. No chemical anything! No white residue!

IN CLOSING...

As summer fast approaches, be safe and conscientious regarding your skin care. Stay hydrated and well-nourished by eating plenty of seasonal fruits and vegetables, and above all, enjoy the outdoors. It is therapeutic and good for the body, mind and soul! Enjoy your summer!

Blessings,

Diane

Remember: schedule with me for your **spring tune up!** Recession-proof rates are in effect! **Join me** for a one on one appointment or come with a friend and get a bigger discount!

Email me for schedule and rates

herbalmgem@gmail.com