

The Sun: Friend or Foe?

by Theresa Crabtree

The sun has undeservedly received a bad reputation. Your intuition as a child was that the sun felt good and meant playtime. People have worked in the sun all of their lives, in many cases, nearly naked yet did not get skin cancer until recently. People who live in northern high latitudes and are rarely in the sun have a high frequency of skin cancer, often in places on the body where the "sun doesn't shine."

Why is this? The sun emits both UVA and UVB rays which work synergistically together to create D3 which protects the skin from damaging effects of the sun. When sunscreen is used to block one or both of the UV rays, D3 cannot be created. As a result, skin damage occurs, which in many cases, leads to skin cancers. Although many fear skin cancer as a result of sun exposure, sunshine actually gives the body the essential ingredients needed to ward off many cancers.

Although D3 can be obtained in the diet from eating specific foods, all a person needs is approximately 20 minutes of sunshine each day over a large part of the body. D3 is created in the epidermis, or outer layer of the skin; it takes approximately 12-24 hours to be utilized by the body. D3 is oil soluble and will be washed away when it combines with the oils in soap as you bathe. Wait several hours to bathe after getting your daily dose of sunshine. When possible bathe with water using soap only as needed.

Vitamin D maintains strong bones, muscle elasticity and is needed for proper nerve stimulation and to boost the immune system. Very few foods have naturally occurring Vitamin D. These include: fatty fish (such as salmon and tuna), beef liver, cheese, egg yolks and mushrooms. Most other foods that have vitamin D are fortified, in other words, Vitamin D is added to the product during processing.

Your skin is the largest organ of your body. Consider each pore as a tiny mouth, ingesting whatever substances you place on your skin. Before using any product on your skin, including soap and shampoo, ask yourself, is this safe for me to eat? If the answer is "no," then you would be wise not to use it on your body.

If you choose to replenish skin oils after bathing, consider using only pure oils such as olive oil, coconut, almond, grapeseed or castor oil. Ditoh enjoys adding chaparral to his skin lotions and as a body spray to refresh, protect and assist in healing the skin. Check out the "[Chaparral](#)" page at www.ditoh4you.com for his remedy recipes!

To protect your skin from over-exposure to the sun, consider wearing a hat and light clothing, especially during the hottest part of the day (10 am - 4 pm). To avoid sunburn, build up your tolerance to sun exposure. Begin the summer season by only exposing your skin about five minutes, then slowly increasing up to 30 minutes before slathering on the sunscreen.

Most sunscreens on the market are made with a host of toxic ingredients, thus exacerbating the problem of skin cancer as well as a myriad of other maladies in the body. If you choose to use a sunscreen, then we suggest one made from completely non-toxic ingredients, such as Sierra Madre.

<http://www.supersalve.com>

If you plan to be in the sun for an extended period of time, or plan to be in water, be sure to re-apply often for maximum benefit. To protect your skin further, avoid alcoholic drinks, smoking, toxic substances and unhealthy eating habits. Build up your natural antioxidant levels by consuming a variety of fresh, raw vegetables on a daily basis.

By maintaining a healthy liver and digestive system, your blood will flow more freely and keep the supply of oxygen and other nutrients needed to create and maintain healthy skin cells. Dry brushing daily with a loofa brush increases blood circulation and removes dead skin cells. Above all, remain hydrated by drinking several ounces of pure water throughout the day.

Feeling depressed or moody?

Get a daily dose of sunshine!

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is an area of concern for those suffering depression and lethargy due to a lack of skin exposure to sunlight for long periods of time. SAD used to be associated with long winter days, however, it has been on the rise as more workers find themselves indoors with no skin exposure to sunlight for days at a time. The body does not receive what it needs to create Vitamin D when the sun exposure comes through windows. So, if you are an indoor office person, consider rolling up your sleeves and pant legs and heading outside to bask in the sun during your lunch break.

Pain Relief from Sunburn

Too much fun in the sun? Fried and miserable?

Damp Cloth

It is important to keep the skin moistened until it heals itself. The first couple of days after the burn, to alleviate the discomfort, moisten a towel or washcloth with cool water and place over the affected areas. For added relief, add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of baking soda to a cool or tepid bath. Other bath options are to add $\frac{1}{2}$ - 1 cup of oatmeal or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of apple cider vinegar. Soak for 15- 20 minutes. Either pat skin dry with a towel or allow your skin to air dry. Do not use ice to cool your skin, this can cause more damage.

Aloe Vera

Aloe Vera has anti-inflammatory properties that will assist in relieving sunburn pain. For added coolness, refrigerate the leaves. Peel off the top layer of the leaf and apply the sticky goo directly onto the sunburn, avoiding the eyes. Reapply as needed.

Vitamin E Oil

To keep the skin moisturized and help with the healing process, Vitamin E. The cheapest form is to use Vitamin E capsules. Simply cut the capsule or prick it with a pin and gently rub the oil onto the affected areas.

Coconut Oil

After the burn has receded, use coconut oil just as you would skin lotion. It will keep your skin hydrated and help you through the itchiness when the peel begins.

SUN RELATED RESOURCES

The Super Salve Company

sells 100% natural skin and body care products including their non-toxic sunscreen, Sierra Madre.

<http://www.supersalve.com>

Dr. Joseph Mercola

Website loaded with natural health products and articles.

View several articles and videos on the health benefits of sun and fallacies surrounding skin cancers.

<http://www.drmercola.com>

Product page filled with good information and non-toxic sunscreens, tanning lotion, sunblock for body and lips and insect repellents.

<http://products.mercola.com/summer-survival-kit>

Natural Medicine

The first part of this article deals with the use of sunscreens and their detrimental effects on the body, the second part covers treatments and prevention of skin cancer.

<http://naturalmedicine.com>

The Environmental Working Group

EWG is a 501(c)(4) organization that specializes in providing useful resources to consumers while simultaneously pushing for national policy change. Includes several articles on the dangers of sunscreen.

<http://www.ewg.org>