

Stay safe in the sun!

STAY SAFE THIS SUMMER!



Nobody wants to spend the entire summer indoors, and indeed some sunshine, below sunburn level, can be good for us, helping the body to create vitamin D and giving many of us a feeling of general wellbeing as we enjoy outdoor summer activities.

However, all too often we over-do our sun exposure, which can lead to a range of skin problems, the most serious of which include

skin cancer. Other summertime skin problems include sunburn, photosensitive rashes and prickly heat.

More than 100,000 new cases of skin cancer are diagnosed annually in the UK, and while the disease can also occur on parts of the body not exposed to sunlight, extensive sun exposure is thought to be responsible for the vast majority of cases. In more than four out of five cases skin cancer is a preventable disease.

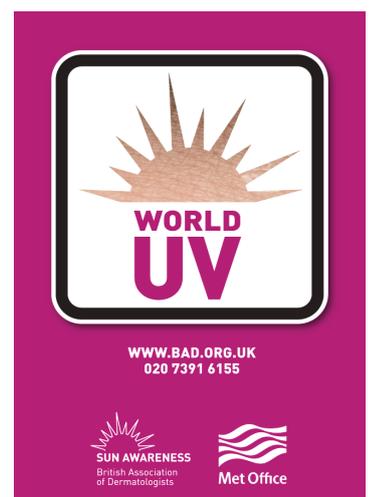
This booklet, produced by the Health and Wellbeing Forum, is designed to highlight to employees the risks of working outside in the summer and provide practical steps to how you can keep yourself and the rest of your team safe in the sun.

DOWNLOAD THE WORLD UV APP

Developed in conjunction with the Met Office, the British Association of Dermatologists created the World UV App which provides real time information on daily UV levels across over 10,000 locations from across the globe.

The free app, available on both iPhone and Android operating systems, uses GPS to pinpoint your location and provide you with relevant UV information. In addition the app will educate you on your skin type and provide you with best practice advice on protecting your skin from the sun.

Download for free from the App Store and Google Play.



SUN PROTECTION PROMOTION

The Health and Wellbeing Forum is pleased to announce that it will be encouraging field employees to protect their skin this summer by putting a bottle of high factor sunscreen into their van. To request a bottle of high factor sunscreen for your van, please contact your team manager.



PROTECT YOURSELF!

Sunscreens will not protect us completely from sun damage on their own. However, they can be useful for protecting the parts of the skin we can't shade or cover. Always use sunscreens together with shade or clothing to avoid getting too much UV exposure.

What is SPF?

Sunscreens in the UK are labelled with an 'SPF'. This stands for 'sun protection factor', although the SPF is more accurately the sun burn protection factor, as it primarily shows the level of protection against UVB, not the protection against UVA.

SPFs are rated on a scale of 6-50+ based on the level of protection they offer, with ratings between 6 to 14 forming the least protected end of the spectrum and ratings of 50+ offering the strongest forms of UVB protection. We recommend a sunscreen with an SPF of 30 as a satisfactory form of sun protection in addition to protective shade and clothing.

UVA star system ★★★★★

When you currently buy sunscreen containing UVA protection in the UK you may notice a UVA star rating on the packaging. The stars range from 0 to 5 and indicate the percentage of UVA radiation absorbed by the sunscreen in

comparison to UVB, in other words the ratio between the level of protection afforded by the UVA protection and the UVB protection. Be aware that if you choose a low SPF it may still have a high level of stars, not because it is providing lots of UVA protection, but because the ratio between the UVA and UVB protection is about the same.



That's why it's important to choose a high SPF as well as a high UVA protection (e.g. a high number of stars). Sunscreens that offer both UVA and UVB protection are sometimes called 'broad spectrum'. A sunscreen with SPF 30 and a UVA rating of 4/5 stars is generally considered as a good standard of sun protection.

Make sure you put enough sunscreen on – people often apply much less than they need to. When your risk of burning is high, ensure that all exposed skin is thoroughly covered in sunscreen. As a guide for an adult this means around two teaspoonfuls of sunscreen if you're just covering your head, arms and neck. Use around two and a half tablespoonfuls if you're covering your entire body, for example while wearing a swimming costume.

And if you do get sunburn . . .

Sunburn is a clear sign that the DNA in your skin cells has been damaged by too much UV radiation. Getting painful sunburn, just once every two years can triple your risk of melanoma skin cancer. Sunburn doesn't have to be raw, peeling or blistering. If your skin has gone red or pink in the sun, it's sunburnt.

Sunburn is caused by UV from the sun. You can't feel UV rays - the heat from the sun comes from infrared rays. This is why people still burn on cool days. Painkillers, such as paracetamol or ibuprofen, will ease the pain by helping to reduce the inflammation caused by sunburn. Sponge sore skin with cool water, then apply soothing aftersun. If you feel unwell or the skin swells badly or blisters, seek medical help and stay out of the sun until all signs of redness have gone.

TOP SUN SAFETY TIPS FOR KIDS



Heading away on a family holiday over the summer?

The Skin Cancer Foundation estimates that 80% of lifetime sun exposure occurs during childhood -- and that just one blistering sunburn can double the risk of getting melanoma later in life. Protect your children by following these tips:

Encourage your child to play in the shade – for example, under trees – especially between 11am and 3pm, when the sun is at its strongest.

Keep babies under the age of six months out of direct sunlight, especially around midday.

Cover exposed parts of your child's skin with sunscreen, even on cloudy or overcast days. Use one that has a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or above and is effective against UVA and UVB. Don't forget to apply it to their shoulders, nose, ears, cheeks, and the tops of their feet. Reapply often throughout the day. Scented and colourful sunscreens appeal to some children and make it easier to see which areas have been covered well.

Be especially careful to protect your child's shoulders and the back of their neck when they're playing, as these are the most common areas for sunburn.

Cover your child up in loose cotton clothes, such as an oversized T-shirt with sleeves.

Get your child to wear a floppy hat with a wide brim that shades their face and neck.

Protect your child's eyes with sunglasses that meet the British Standard (BSEN 1836:2005) and carry the "CE" mark – check the label.

If your child is swimming, use a waterproof sunblock of factor 30 or above. Reapply after towelling.

Set a good example for your kids. Skin protection is important for all the family, so team up with your children to stay protected when venturing out in the sun.

IT'S EXHAUSTING!

Heat exhaustion occurs when the body cannot lose heat fast enough. If it's not treated quickly, it can lead to heat stroke, which is a much more dangerous condition. Signs of heat exhaustion include faintness, dizziness, palpitations, nausea, headaches, low blood pressure, tiredness, confusion, loss of appetite and hallucinations.

What should I do if someone has signs of heat exhaustion?

-  Get them to rest in a cool place, ideally in a room with air conditioning.
-  Give them plenty of water. Avoid alcohol or caffeine as this can increase levels of dehydration.
-  Cool their skin with cold water. Use a shower or cold bath to cool them down, or if this is not possible, wet facecloths in cold water and apply to their skin.
-  Loosen any unnecessary clothing and make sure that the person gets plenty of ventilation. Monitor their condition closely.



PROTECT YOUR EYES!

It's not just your skin which needs protection from the sun. Protect your eyes if you are out and about in the sun as long term exposure to sunlight increases the risk of a type of cataract and is also linked to pterygia, growths on the surface of the eye.

Strong sunlight can burn the eyes

You might think that the sun doesn't get that strong in Northern Ireland but any over exposure to ultraviolet light without proper eye protection could cause a temporary but painful burn to the surface of the eye, similar to sunburn on the skin.

Always avoid looking directly at the sun

Staring directly at the sun can permanently scar the retina, the area at the back of the eye responsible for vision.

Sunglasses can also offer protection although not all sunglasses are adequate. When shopping for sunglasses, choose a pair that has one of the following:

- ☀️ the CE Mark and British Standard (BS EN ISO 12312 - 1:2013)
- ☀️ a UV 400 label
- ☀️ a statement that the sunglasses offer 100% UV protection.

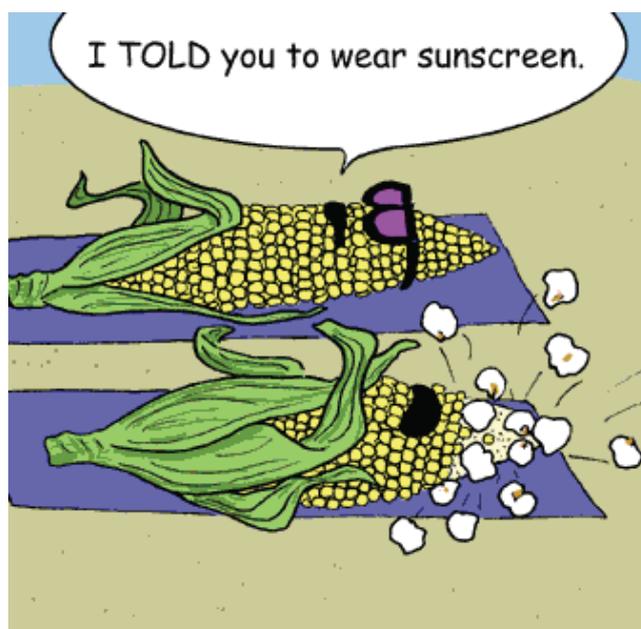
NIE Networks offers field and operational staff wraparound tinted safety glasses, which can be used comfortably with visors. Please contact your local Stores for more information.



SIMPLE SUNSAFE TIPS

Follow a few simple precautions to protect your skin from harm during the summer months.

- ☀️ Spend time in the shade between 11 am and 3pm or, if you do have to be outside, make sure you are covered up.
- ☀️ Make sure you never burn. If you have fair or freckled skin, you are more at risk of skin damage.
- ☀️ Aim to cover up with a T-shirt, hat and sunglasses.
- ☀️ Always use factor 30+ sunscreen and apply before going outside. Use plenty!
- ☀️ Report mole changes or unusual skin growths to your GP.
- ☀️ Reapply sunscreen regularly - it can be easily rubbed or sweated off.



For more information about health and wellbeing initiatives at NIE Networks, visit [the wire](#) or contact a member of the Health and Wellbeing Forum.