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# LIFEGUARD AND CAMP COUNSELOR'S SUN PROTECTION RECOMMENDATIONS

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**Live** SunSmart™



# LIFEGUARD/CAMP COUNSELOR SUN PROTECTION INFORMATION



## PURPOSE OF THIS RESOURCE

This booklet explores the relationship to UV rays and skin cancer. It provides you with information and advice to understand and confidently address sun protection in the workplace, such as at local pools and summer camps. Recommendations for your employees, including camp counselors and lifeguards are included.

Information in this booklet includes:

- The harmful effects of Ultraviolet Radiation (UV Rays)
- Describing levels of UV Rays
- Sunburn
- Premature Aging of the Skin
- Eye Damage
- Skin Cancer
- Skin Types
- Sunscreen
- How to address sun protection among employees
  - Recommendations
  - Education and Trainings
  - Contract/policy sample



For more information visit [livesunsmart.org](https://livesunsmart.org)

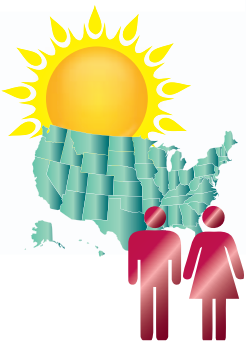




## PROTECTION FROM THE SUN

Lifeguards and camp counselors who spend all of their day during the summer months working outdoors are at higher risk of skin cancer. This is because solar radiation is carcinogenic to humans. All skin types can be damaged by exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UV RAYS). Damage is permanent and irreversible and increases with each exposure. Skin cancer is the most **commonly diagnosed cancer in the United States**, and most cases are preventable. Some people are at higher risk of skin cancer than others, but anyone can get it. The most preventable cause of skin cancer is exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light emitted from the sun. Further, skin cancer is highly curable when detected early making early intervention a key component to survival. It is important to be aware and understand the dangers of working in the sun, in order to communicate to your lifeguard/camp counselor team. Below are some statistics about skin cancer.

- One in five Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime.
- Melanoma is the most common form of cancer for young adults 25-29 years old and the second most common form of cancer for young people 15-29 years old.
- Over the past 33 years, more people have been diagnosed with skin cancer than ALL other cancer combined.
- Of the seven most common cancers in the US, melanoma is the only one whose incidence is on the rise.
- Just one blistering sunburn increases your risk of skin cancer by six times.
- Skin cancer afflicts everyone- no matter their age, gender, color or ethnicity.
- Tan skin is damaged skin. Even if you don't burn, you are still at risk. Cumulative effects of sun exposure put us at higher risk of cellular damage, early wrinkling, age spots, actinic keratosis, and skin cancer.
- Some studies suggest that fair skin type and exposure to UV light may be risk factors for ocular melanoma, melanoma of the eye.



## THE HARMFUL HEALTH EFFECTS OF ULTRAVIOLET RADIATION

Exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UV RAYS) is known to cause adverse health effects on the skin, eyes and immune system.

Did you know UV Rays from the sun:

- Is high-energy radiation, capable of causing damage to living organisms
- Is carcinogenic to humans
- Cannot be seen or felt
- Is not related to temperature
- Can be high even on cool and cloudy days
- Can pass through loosely woven material
- Can bounce off reflective surfaces such as metal, concrete, water and snow
- Is the best natural source of vitamin D and is essential to health in small amounts





## DESCRIBING LEVELS OF UV RAYS

Due to the points outlined above, levels of UV RAYS vary across the country on any given day. The UV Index, a rating system adopted from the World Health Organization, is a simple way of describing the amount of UV RAYS at the earth's surface.

The values of the UV Index range from zero upward. The higher the number, the stronger the levels of UV RAYS and the less time it takes for damage to occur.

The UV Index has five categories:

- Low: UV Index of 1–2
- Moderate: UV Index of 3–5
- High: UV Index of 6–7
- Very High: UV Index of 8–10
- Extreme: UV Index of 11 and above

When the UV Index is at 3 and above, sun protection is required, as the amount of UV RAYS reaching the earth's surface is strong enough to damage the skin, which can lead to skin cancer. When the UV level is below 3 it is safe to get some sun without protection to help with vitamin D. This chart indicates the index levels and what recommended precautions lifeguards/camp counselors and pool/beach/camp attendees should take.

 Wear broad-spectrum SPF15 sunscreen and lip balm every day of the year.    <a href="https://livesunsmart.org">livesunsmart.org</a>		
UV Index	Description	Recommended Protection
0-2	Low risk to the average person	Wear a hat and broad-spectrum UV protected sunglasses.
3-5	Little risk of harm from unprotected sun exposure	Wear a hat and broad-spectrum UV protected sunglasses.
6-7	High risk of harm from unprotected sun exposure	Wear a hat and broad-spectrum UV protected sunglasses. Wear long sleeves and pants, preferably with UPF, to cover your body.
8-10	Very high risk from unprotected sun exposure	Wear a hat and broad-spectrum UV protected sunglasses. Wear long sleeves and pants, preferably with UPF, to cover your body.
11+	Extremely high risk of unprotected sun exposure	Take all precautions possible.

## SUNBURN

All types of sunburn, whether serious or mild, can cause permanent and irreversible skin damage. If you don't burn you may think you don't need to worry about being exposed to the sun, but you would be wrong. Many people have the misconception that if they don't get a sunburn (tan easily) they are not at risk, but in fact, UV exposure is absorbed and builds up over time and has a damaging effect. Experts say that any change in skin color is a sign of skin damage that could lead to premature aging and skin cancers.

## SOLAR KERATOSES AND PREMATURE AGING OF THE SKIN

Solar keratoses are red, flattish, dry, scaling areas on the skin, sometimes called sunspots. Sunspots are a warning sign that a person is prone to skin damage and skin cancer. The most visible signs of aging are the result of damage to the skin caused by exposure to UV RAYS. This can include skin wrinkling, loss of elasticity, irregular pigmentation, brown spots and altered skin texture.





## EYE DAMAGE

Acute effects of exposure to UV RAYS on the eye include:

- photokeratitis (inflammation of the cornea and the iris) and,
  - photoconjunctivitis (inflammation of the conjunctiva, the membrane that lines the inside of the eyelids and white of the eye), more commonly known as snow blindness or welder's flash.
- Symptoms range from mild irritation to severe pain.



There is evidence that chronic exposure to UV RAYS contributes to age-related macular degeneration and cataracts, both a cause of blindness. Long-term effects may also include pterygium (white or creamy opaque growth on the cornea), squamous cell carcinoma of the conjunctiva and cancer on the skin surrounding the eye.

Another type of melanoma that can occur on the skin of the eye or in the eye itself is called ocular melanoma, also known as uveal or choroidal melanoma.

One way to protect our eyes from ultraviolet rays and sun damage is through the sunglasses we buy/wear. It is important to wear broad spectrum (UVA and UVB) protective sunglasses, to shield your eyes from the sun.

## SKIN CANCER

The most serious health effect of exposure to UV rays is skin cancer. Our body is made up of tiny building blocks called cells. Cells normally grow, divide, die and are replaced in a controlled way. Cancer is a disease that occurs when the cells of the body are damaged, causing them to grow out of control.

The skin is the largest organ of the body. Skin cancer can grow when the cells that make up our skin are damaged. In most cases this damage is caused by overexposure to UV rays. The top layer of the skin contains three different types of cells: basal cells, squamous cells and melanocytes. Skin cancer types are named after the type of skin cell in which the cancer develops.

The three types of skin cancer are:

1. Basal cell carcinoma (BCC) is the most common type of skin cancer. It grows slowly over months and years and may damage nearby tissues and organs if left untreated.
2. Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) is less common, but grows faster. It may spread to other parts of the body if left untreated.
3. Melanoma is the least common, but most dangerous type of skin cancer. Most skin cancer deaths are from melanoma. It is often fast growing and can spread to other parts of the body where it can form a new cancer.

Basal cell carcinomas and squamous cell carcinomas are often grouped together and called non-melanoma or common skin cancers.

Skin cancer can be an employment-related disease resulting from repeated and long-term exposure to a known carcinogen. Skin cancer therefore fits within the national health and safety priority action area of preventing occupational disease more effectively.

All employers must protect workers by providing a safe working environment that is free of health risks. This includes taking proper steps to reduce the known health risks associated with exposure to UV RAYS for workers who spend all or part of their time working outdoors. Camp counselors and lifeguards spend most of their days outside, therefore it is essential that employers are aware and are advising their employees how to safely protect themselves, while on the job.



## WHAT'S YOUR SKIN TYPE

Everyone is at risk, regardless of his or her skin type, but knowing your skin type will help you identify how to best protect your skin. The lower your Fitzpatrick skin type number, the more vigilant you should be in protecting your skin from sun, since you have a higher risk of sun damage, like photo-aging and possibly skin cancer.

This chart provides a description of the six skin types. Advise your camp counselors/lifeguards to understand their skin type by using this chart. It is important to apply sunscreen every day of the year.

## SUNSCREEN

SPF stands for Sun Protection Factor. The number is determined experimentally indoors by exposing humans to a light spectrum meant to mimic noontime sun.



For example, a sunscreen with an SPF Of 15 filters 92% of the UVB (ultraviolet B, or the sun's shortwaves) and allows a person to stay out in the sun 15 times longer than without using sunscreen. In other words, SPF 15 delays the onset of a sunburn in a person who would otherwise burn in 10 minutes to burn in 150 minutes. There are broad-spectrum sunscreens that protect against UVA and a UVB radiation.

## Fitzpatrick Skin Type

	<b>I</b> <b>Ivory</b> Always burns, never tans	
	<b>II</b> <b>Beige</b> Usually burns, tans with difficulty	
	<b>III</b> <b>Light Brown</b> Sometimes burns, slow tanning	
	<b>IV</b> <b>Medium Brown</b> Rarely burns, fast tanning	
	<b>V</b> <b>Dark Brown</b> Rarely burns, fast & easy tanning	
	<b>VI</b> <b>Very Dark Brown</b> Almost never burns, Fast & dark tanning	

To download flyer on skin type, visit  
[livesunsmart.org/library](http://livesunsmart.org/library)



# HOW MUCH SUNSCREEN



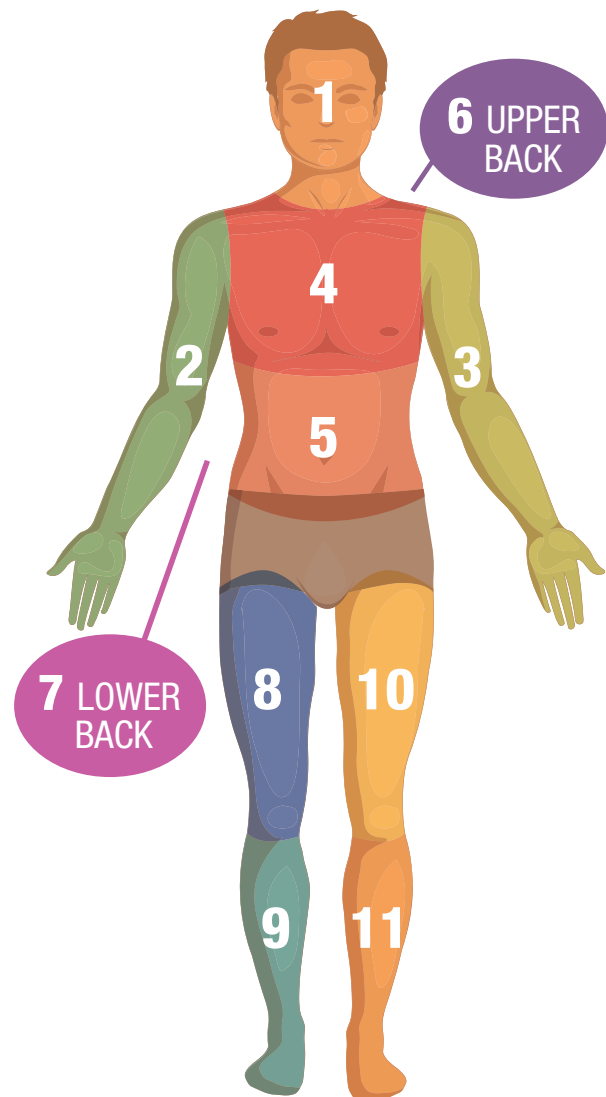
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To cover an entire body, you should use about an ounce of sunscreen. An easy way to measure is to squeeze sunscreen on your middle and index fingers, the full length of each.



**APPLY  
2 FINGERS OF  
SUNSCREEN  
PER ZONE**

Using spray? Be sure to fully cover all 11 zones—do not rub in.



**DIVIDE  
YOUR BODY INTO  
11 ZONES**

To download as a flyer or sign, visit  
[livesunsmart.org/library](http://livesunsmart.org/library)

# ADDRESSING SUN PROTECTION AMONG YOUR EMPLOYEES



## SUN PROTECTION RECOMMENDATIONS

Exposure from the sun can happen on a cloudy day or on a sunny day, therefore, it's important to take precautions and wear the appropriate clothing/accessories. Encourage your employees to follow the following recommendations:

- Wear a hat with a wide brim, to shade the face and neck, but does not reduce your visibility
- Wear broad spectrum (UVA and UVB) protective sunglasses
- Apply a daily broad-spectrum with SPF 15. Apply 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every two hours or immediately after swimming or sweating
- Seek shade during your breaks, when possible, but especially between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., when the intensity of the sun's UV rays is greatest.

**WEAR SUNSCREEN,  
LIP BALM,  
SUNGLASSES,  
UPF CLOTHING  
AND A HAT**

In addition, check the daily sun protection times (when UV level is 3 and above) or if camp counselors/lifeguards are to be outdoors for extended periods of time, try to:

- Provide shade. When possible, have activities in an area protected by the sun, especially during the hours of most intense UV radiation, 11am to 4pm.
- Provide and use sun protective clothing (ex. Broad-brimmed hat, sunglasses, long sleeves)
- Advise and remind workers to apply at least broad-spectrum SPF 15 sunscreen and reapply every 2 hours, as well as lip balm.

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Providing lifeguards and camp counselors education and training in sun protection is essential for their safety while working in the sun. Information should be provided about sun protection measures and UV rays to bring awareness to this health and safety issue, but also improving their behaviors 'on' and 'off' the job.

Trainings should include topics such as:

- Harmful health effects of exposure to UV rays
- Risk factors for skin cancer
- Factors affecting levels of UV rays
- Correct application and use of sun protection measure
- Provide employees with information to perform self-examination of their own skin
- Provide staff with the tools to act as positive role models for younger campers/pool goers
- Promote the use of sun protection measures in all facets of life, on or off the job



In addition, an online training course for staff can also be accessed on the US EPA SunWise website:  
<http://cfpub.epa.gov/sunwiserec/>.

**We suggest requiring all outdoor workers—especially those who work with young people—to take the online training and print out a certificate upon completion.**







## SUN PROTECTION GUIDELINES FOR EMPLOYEES

### Agreement

As a camp counselor or lifeguard at \_\_\_\_\_ we encourage you to Live SunSmart. Since your job requires you to be in the sun for a majority of the day, it is important that you are aware of sun protection measures. Many people believe that being tan is healthy and attractive, however, there are many dangers that come along with that tan, including wrinkles or even developing skin cancer. We encourage you, as an employee of the (pool/beach/camp) to consider following these recommendations, when both at work and at home:

- Wear a hat with a wide brim to shade the face and neck, but does not reduce your visibility
- Wear broad spectrum (UVA and UVB) protective sunglasses
- Apply a daily broad-spectrum with SPF 15. Apply 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every two hours or immediately after swimming or sweating
- Seek shade during your breaks, when possible, but especially between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., when the intensity of the sun's UV rays is greatest.

Since you are a lifeguard/camp counselor you are working with many younger children throughout the day. Use this opportunity to be a role model for them and show them the importance of being SunSmart. In addition to following those recommendations yourself, we encourage you to remind the campers/pool goers to remember to apply sunscreen every two hours, and wear sun protective clothing, such as long sleeves, wide-brimmed hats, and sunglasses. Take time out of your day to make sure to reapply sunscreen, and assist young people if they need help. Remember, as a lifeguard or camp counselor your job is to be a positive role model for young kids.

Please be sure to understand the recommendations we are providing you to stay sun safe while at work. These practices should be exercised on your personal time as well and should become a part of your everyday routine. As a lifeguard/camp counselor, we encourage you to make sure to address the following:

- At the beginning of activities, make sure to ask the campers/pool goers if they have applied their sunscreen. If they did not, ask them to put it on before they start the activity.
- During the day, make sure they reapply sunscreen at least every 2 hours.
- Encourage everyone to wear sunglasses when sitting near water or during outdoor activities. Model this behavior by wearing sunglasses throughout the day.
- Encourage everyone to wear a hat when they are outdoors. The hat should protect the face, neck, and ears. Model this behavior by wearing a hat while at work.

I understand what it means to Live SunSmart and will take all measures as it relates to protecting myself and encouraging other to protect themselves from the sun.

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Print Name

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Signature

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Date