

STAY SUN SAFE

Here's how to get your vitamin D fix without unnecessary risk

ONE IN FIVE AMERICANS WILL DEVELOP skin cancer in their lifetime. It's the most commonly diagnosed type of cancer in the U.S., but it's also one of the most preventable, and it can be cured with early detection. As May is Skin Cancer Awareness Month, we asked dermatologist Kathy L. Anderson, DO, FAOCD how to spot skin cancer and still have fun in the sun. Her practice is in Clearwater, Florida, which averages 361 days of sunshine a year.

AMERICAN WAY: With early detection in mind, should we self-scan at home?

Dr. Anderson: Yes! Pay attention to any skin spots and moles. If they start changing in any way — itching, getting larger or changing shape — get them checked by a dermatologist.

AW: What are your top three recommendations for sun safety?

Dr. Anderson: Use a good sunscreen — I like anything by La Roche-Posay or Blue Lizard — and incorporate that step into your daily routine. Second, cover up with appropriate clothing if you're going to be outside during the peak hours (between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.), and reapply sunscreen every two hours. Finally, make sure you hydrate well, inside and out, by using a good moisturizer and drinking plenty of water, which helps improve the skin's texture and also helps with the regeneration of new skin cells.

AW: Speaking of sunscreen, what should we look for?

Dr. Anderson: Look for broad-spectrum, mineral sunscreens (try Sunday Afternoons) that have titanium dioxide or zinc dioxide. Those minerals don't get absorbed into the body since the molecules are too large. Mineral sunscreens are going to protect you better and last longer [than chemical sunscreens].

AW: How big of a deal is a sunburn?

Dr. Anderson: Just one blistering sunburn as a child can double the chance of developing melanoma (the deadliest form of skin cancer)

later in life. Five or more blistering sunburns at any age can also double the chance of melanoma. Heredity plays a role.

AW: How can we combat sun damage?

Dr. Anderson: Antioxidants taken orally are really beneficial. Vitamin D is good for general health, and omega-3 fish oils, vitamin C and alpha lipoic acid are all antioxidants which are really good to help clear out free radicals that UVA and UVB rays create in our bodies.

AW: What's the biggest solar misconception?

Dr. Anderson: People still think it's safe to go into tanning booths. It's truly bad for you. Also, people say that they want to get a "base" to help prevent them from burning. Well, you're still going to burn if you're out too long — and don't forget your ears, feet, chest and nose. These areas of the body are often skipped or forgotten. —JENNIFER BRADLEY FRANKLIN



Up in the Air

Staying at even the most pristine hotels can feel a little less than comfortable for germaphobes. Enter the new Virus Zero portable air-purification system (\$179), which leverages Samsung SPi technology to rid the air of 99.7 percent of pesky airborne contaminants like mold, pet dander, dust mites, smoke and pollen. Unlike traditional filter-based gadgets, this one releases disinfecting ions for quiet, nondisruptive air cleansing. Although it's about the size of your grande latte (with power cords for the car and wall), it covers up to 230 square feet of space — which more than covers many rented rooms. Now we can breathe easy. Viruszero.com —J.B.F.