

# Heath and Wellness News

Summer Sun

July 2018

Summertime! Yay! It's time to spend days off as lazily as possible by the beach, in the swimming pool, running through the sprinkler, or meandering through botanical gardens in your local city! In the evening, maybe you're grilling on the porch, sitting by a campfire, or taking an evening stroll in your neighborhood while the sun stays up later. Summer is a special time of year, a time of ease. Some people don't feel as comfortable in heat or humidity. For some of us, it's a time to unwind and feel free. Others are stifled and opt to stay in air-conditioned rooms or see movies to beat the heat. Either way, it's crucial you're taking care of your body during the summer. Making an effort to drink more water will go a long way with your health. Also: wearing sunscreen or a protective hat is very important! For those who think their darker skin color exempts them from having to worry about sun protection, dermatologists have a message: Damaging UV rays can penetrate all types of skin, regardless of your ethnicity. So, even people with darker skin tones need sunscreen.



And while skin cancer rates are significantly lower in African-Americans and Hispanics than in Caucasians, low risk doesn't mean zero risk. That's because darker people naturally produce more melanin, the pigment that gives skin its color. Simply put, the more melanin you have, the fewer UV rays penetrate your skin. Melanin increases in response to sun exposure and skin gets darker, but that "tan" isn't protecting your skin; it's a sign of sun damage. "UV exposure causes cell damage, and the body produces more melanin as a protective mechanism," says David Bank, M.D., director of The Center for Dermatology, Cosmetic and Laser Surgery in Westchester County, N.Y.



## Time in the sun will age your skin

The damage caused by UV exposure will also make your skin look older. Photodamage in people of color will lead to sagging of the skin, loss of volume from the face, and hyperpigmentation. Many people avoid using sunscreen, thinking that their time in the sun will be minimal. However, it can be helpful to wear broad-spectrum sunscreens, even if your sun time will be brief. Here is a short guide that explains these often-confusing words.

### What are sunscreens?

Sunscreens are products combining several ingredients that help prevent the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation from reaching the skin. Two types of ultraviolet radiation, UVA and UVB, damage the skin and increase your risk of skin cancer. Sunscreens vary in their ability to protect against UVA and UVB rays.

### What are UVA and UVB?

Ultraviolet (UV) radiation is part of the electromagnetic (light) spectrum that reaches the earth from the sun. It has wavelengths shorter than visible light, make it invisible to the naked eye. Ultraviolet A (UVA) is the longer wave that causes lasting skin damage, skin aging, and can cause cancer. Ultraviolet B (UVB) is the shorter wave that causes sunburns.

### What is SPF?

SPF, or sun protection factor, is a measure of a sunscreen's ability to prevent UVB from damaging the skin. Here's how it works: if it takes 20 minutes for your unprotected skin to start turning red, using an SPF 15 sunscreen theoretically prevents reddening 15 times longer, about five hours. Most sunscreens with an SPF of 15 or higher do an excellent job of protecting against UVB.

## What does broad-spectrum mean?

Broad-spectrum sunscreens protect the skin from both UVA and UVB rays.

For a guide on which sunscreen is best for you, here's a great website: [Environmental Working Group Sunscreen Database](#)

We need to take caution to avoid burns and over-exposure. The skin turns bright red when you've been in the sun too long, and it later hurts. Take in the benefits of sunlight with a mindful eye. Here are a few natural ways to protect yourself:

Wear clothing with ample coverage and wide-brimmed hats when you spend time in the sun. Eating foods rich in healthy fats and antioxidants helps protect your skin from damage, including UV damage. This means you should reach for dark, colorful fruits and vegetables that contain carotenoids and other powerful antioxidants. Such foods are carrots, dark, leafy greens, and tomatoes. Also eating nuts, seeds, coconut oil, avocados, sea vegetables and microalgae for the best fatty acids and even some healthy saturated fats can be protective. Carotenoids give your skin a healthy bronze glow even without sunlight while making sure you burn less often. Coconut oil blocks about 20% of the sun's rays. This means you can enjoy the sun 20% longer than normal without getting burned. Warning: This is not really much longer, so don't think you are covered for hours! You are more likely to tan and keep your tan with coconut oil if you apply it often, in half-hour bursts. It also moisturizes your skin, lessens inflammation, and smooths out blemishes while it limits sun damage.

## July Exercise This bodyweight circuit works your entire body!

Looking to vary your workouts? Here's a summer workout you can do inside if the weather is too hot or humid, or at home if you do not feel like driving to the gym. It can also be done at the gym as a warm-up if you cut the time in half.

Set a timer to 16 minutes. Do this circuit as many times as possible in 16 minutes.

15 jumping jacks

15 bodyweight squats

10 sit-ups

5 push-ups (can be modified from the knees)



## July Recipe Summer Tomato and Cantaloupe Salad

A summer, 10-ingredient melon salad with cantaloupe and mint tossed in lime juice, paired with cucumber, tomatoes, and onion tossed in a light vinaigrette. Refreshing, fiber-rich, and so delicious. This recipe is also high in carotenoids.

Prep time: 20 minutes Total time: 20 minutes

Serves 4-5 and is a great side dish for cookouts and weeknights.

### Ingredients

Veggies

1/2 c. thinly sliced cucumber

1/2 c. cherry or grape tomatoes, halved

1/4 red onion, thinly sliced

1 Tbsp. olive oil or avocado oil

2 tsp. apple cider vinegar

Healthy pinch each of sea salt and black pepper



### Dressing

3 Tbsp. fresh lime juice

1 Tbsp. maple syrup

Pinch of sea salt

1 Tbsp. olive oil or avocado oil

Cantaloupe

3 heaping cups (~520 g) cantaloupe, cubed or scooped with a melon baller (~1 cantaloupe). Cantaloupe can also be purchased cut and cubed if you do not want to cut a cantaloupe.

2 Tbsp. fresh mint leaves, whole, torn or cut.

**Instructions:** Add cucumber, tomato, and onion to a small mixing bowl and top with olive oil, apple cider vinegar, salt, and pepper. Toss to combine. Then taste and adjust flavor as needed, adding more vinegar for acidity or salt and pepper for flavor balance. Set in the refrigerator to chill.

Next, prepare dressing by adding lime juice, maple syrup, and sea salt to a small mixing bowl and whisking to combine. Then slowly stream in olive oil while whisking to combine. Taste and adjust flavor as needed, adding more lime juice for brightness/acidity, maple syrup for sweetness, or salt for flavor balance. Set aside.

Add cantaloupe to a large serving bowl and top with dressing. Gently toss to combine. Then add the cucumber-tomato-onion salad on top, leaving any excess liquid/dressing behind.

Gently toss to combine and garnish with fresh mint. Serve.

Best when fresh, though leftovers keep in the refrigerator up to 3 days. Leave mint on the side to keep as fresh as possible.

Sources:

[Consumer Reports](#)

[Sun Warrior](#)

[Skin Care Foundation](#)

[Recipe from The Minimalist Baker](#)



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