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Protect your skin from the sun

The basics

Over time, taking in the sun without any protection can lead to problems — from dry skin and wrinkles to skin cancer. Use these tips to enjoy your time in the sun, safely.

Cover up. Clothing and hats are good basic protection from the sun.

The sun's rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. During these hours, try to limit your time in the sun.

Sunscreen is an excellent protector. But you must put it on correctly. Work from your face down to your feet. Don't forget your ears and neck, or to let someone else get your back and shoulders. Also, if you go swimming, put more on every 1 to 2 hours.

Common skin cancers

- Basal cell carcinomas — 80 percent of all skin cancers
- Squamous cell carcinomas — 16 percent of all skin cancers
- Malignant melanomas — 4 percent of all skin cancers

Sunscreen and care recommendations

Skin type	Recommended protection
Sun-sensitive skin (certain skin conditions and allergies; sensitivity because of medication)	Generally, you shouldn't be in the sun. But if you have to be, protect yourself. Wear a lot of clothes. Use a broad-spectrum, high-SPF (sun protection factor) sunscreen.
White, pale, burns easily	Use SPF 15 or higher for everyday care. Use SPF 30 or higher for the beach or for long hours in the sun.
White, able to tan	
Asian, Hispanic, Indian and fair African Americans	Use SPF 15 or higher.
Darker-skinned African Americans	Your skin gives you good natural protection from the sun. But for long hours in the sun, use SPF 15 or higher.

Learn more about skin care. Visit the Aetna IntelliHealth® website at www.intelihealth.com.

Source: Aetna IntelliHealth. Available at www.intelihealth.com. Accessed January 24, 2011.

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