



Central Jersey Club of NANBPWC, Inc.
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HEALTH NOTES AUGUST 2023



Healthy Facts for Summer Sun Safety

August is Summer Sun Safety Month. Global warming is affecting everyone as the planet reaches its highest temperatures ever recorded by man this summer. Should Black people wear sunscreen, do they get skin cancer? Well before answering, let's take a deeper look.

Skin protection

2 types of Ultraviolet (UV) rays

UVA- Penetrates deep layers, produces age spots, wrinkles

UVB- Penetrates surface layers, produces "Sun burn"

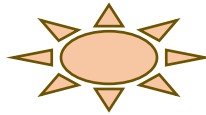
Both damage DNA

2 types of sunscreens: Physical and Chemical

- **PHYSICAL:** Blocks UV light, stops penetration into skin by either reflecting the light or absorbing it. Contains zinc oxide or titanium dioxide. May remain visible on the skin after application.
- **CHEMICAL:** Works by absorbing UV light, causing it to undergo a chemical reaction that prevents UV from damaging your skin. Avobenzene, oxybenzone, octocrylene, and ecamsule are commonly used. Is absorbed by the body, but exact amount unknown.

Protection from UV rays

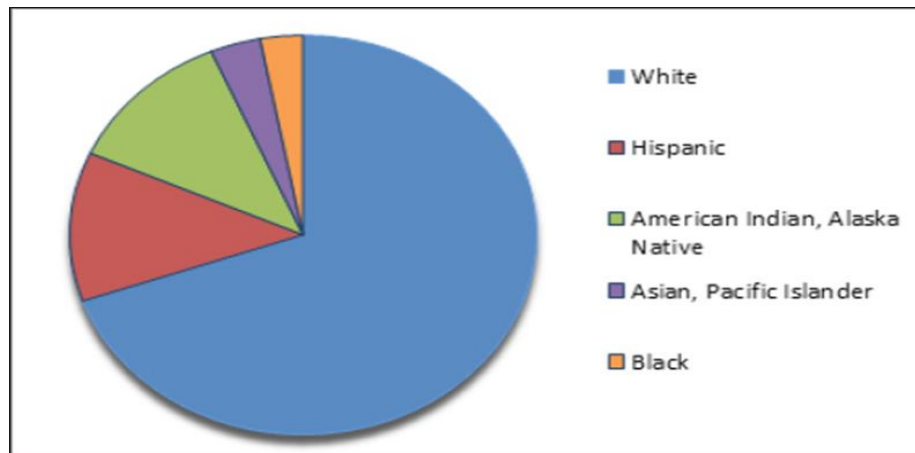
- Avoid prolonged exposure to the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. when Ultraviolet (UV) rays are at their strongest.
- Apply sunscreen with sun protective factor (SPF) of 30 at least. Apply generously (2 tablespoonsful) and often, start 30 minutes before needed, then every 2 hours or more frequently if sweating or swimming.
- Wear clothing to cover your arms and legs. Try wearing a wide brimmed hat and sunglasses to help prevent UV damage.



<https://newsnetwork.mayoclinic.org/discussion/consumer-health-summer-sun-safety/>

Melanoma; deadliest form of Skin Cancer Prevalence by Race/Ethnicity

People with darker skin tones have more melanin which can filter out twice the amount of UV rays than people of the Caucasian race. But people of any race can develop skin cancer.



Whites have the highest rate of melanoma of the skin followed by American Indian/Alaska Native, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander and then Blacks. **However Blacks have a 5-year survival rate of 70% which is significantly lower than 92% for Whites.** This may be due to presenting differently with fewer Doctors versed in diagnosing skin cancer in African Americans, leading to treatment at later stages.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5454668/>



Basal and Squamous Cell Skin Cancer

- Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC): Exposure to UV radiation primary cause, most common in White Americans.
- Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC): Due to inflammatory or ulcerative processes. Most common in Black Americans.
- Factors that may contribute to higher mortality rates in African Americans include a greater risk of aggressive skin cancers (higher risk of SCC) and delays in diagnosis of skin cancers.

<https://cdn.mdedge.com/files/s3fs-public/ct099005307.pdf>

Acral Lentiginous Melanoma (ALM)

Frequently seen in Blacks, develops in areas not exposed to the sun such as the palms of the hands, the soles of feet, mouth, genitals, and underneath nails.

Often diagnosed in later stages, leading to higher mortality rates.

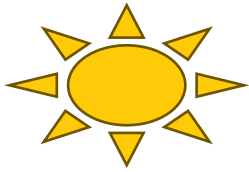


**Skin cancer is most common
Malignancy in the U.S.**

Prevalence: 40% of cancers in Whites, 1-4% in Blacks

SCC affects Black Americans Twice as often as White Americans

<https://www.healthline.com/health/black-people-need-sunscreen#How-did-this-sunscreen-gap-come-about>



Medications and Conditions that Increase Risk of Sun Burn

Some medications increase your sensitivity to UV rays of the sun as do some diseases. In each case, it is important to protect yourself with sunscreen. Read caution labels on meds and speak to your pharmacist or Doctor. See examples below.

Medications

Antianxiety drugs
Antibiotics (Quinolones, sulfas, doxycycline)
Antidepressants
Some Diuretics (for blood pressure)
Antihyperglycemics (meds for diabetes)
NSAIDs pain relievers ; especially piroxicam and ketoprofen

Conditions

Lupus erythematosus (LE)
Psoriasis
Rosacea
Vitiligo
Very Well Health.com



Basal Cell Carcinoma (BCC), a skin cancer due to exposure to UV light, is the most common skin cancer in whites and the second most common after Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) in people of color. It can be effectively treated when diagnosed early. Given the sparse amount of research and training of dermatologist on skin ailments in people of color, one must be vigilant in finding doctors that can recognize and treat our concerns.

SPF13 from melanin is not enough protection and “Black don’t crake” is a myth. Choose a broad-spectrum sunscreen, designed with Blacks in mind like Black Girl Sunscreen[®] or CeraVe[®] if you like. Questions abound over possible side effects and environmental concerns with Sunscreens. But life- time exposure to UV rays unquestionably increases your risk of disorders. Be alert to any skin changes and choose a way to protect yourself and your family from UV exposure.

For a list of Physicians knowledgeable in treating patients of color in Dermatology, click on the link below for more information:

<https://skinofcolorsociety.org/business-directory/>

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