

HEALTH MATTERS

Sun

and Heat-Related Problems



patientfirst.com

Patient First[®]
Neighborhood Medical Centers



Spring turns to summer. The days grow longer, and the sun gets hotter. Warm rays are welcomed by many – yet provide some reasons for caution. The heat feels good too, but we need to be thoughtful in avoiding its dangers. So then, what are some risks of too much sun exposure and excessive heat?

What are some of the dangers of excessive sun exposure?

Excessive sun exposure can damage the skin and lead to wrinkles, discolored areas of the skin, spider veins, and skin cancers, including melanomas.

How do you prevent sun-related skin damage?

Sun-related skin damage can be prevented by avoiding excessive direct sun exposure, especially between 10 am and 4 pm when the sun's rays are the strongest. If being in the sun is unavoidable, sunscreen with SPF (sun protection factor)



of 15 or greater should be applied 30 minutes prior to sun exposure and reapplied every 2 hours.

How can one determine if a skin lesion is a melanoma or a non-cancerous mole?

One can use the “ABCD rule” when attempting to determine if a mole is a melanoma:

A = **A**symmetry – If a line is drawn through the center of the mole, the halves would not match.

B = The **B**order of the mole is irregular.

C = The **C**olor of the mole is uneven with shades of brown, black, tan, red, white, and/or blue.

D = Change in the **D**iameter of the mole.

If any mole is of concern, whether it meets the above criteria or not, you should seek the advice of your health care provider.

Are certain people more susceptible to damaging their skin with excessive sun exposure?

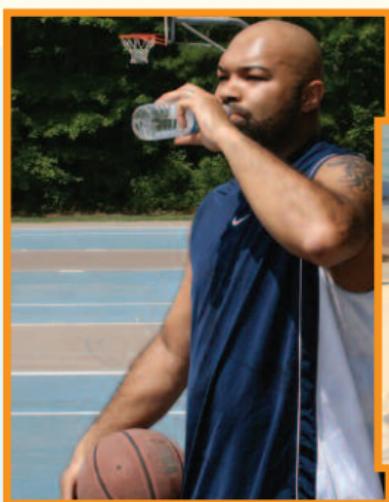
Yes, the risk of skin damage with excessive sun exposure is greatest in people who have fair skin or freckled skin, which burns easily. But people of all skin colors can get cancer from the sun’s ultraviolet rays. Skin damage from exposure to the sun can occur in everyone.



Enjoy the sun, but do so safely. The following tips can help:

In addition to avoiding uninterrupted sun exposure between 10 am and 4 pm whenever possible,

- Cover-up when you can with long-sleeved shirts and pants.
- Hats are fine, but remember baseball caps won't protect your ears and neck from the sun.
- Always use sunscreen with a minimum of 15 SPF, even when it's cloudy, and reapply at least every 2 hours.



What are some of the dangers of excessive heat exposure?

Excessive heat exposure may initially lead to heat cramps, followed by heat exhaustion, and ultimately heat stroke. Treatment should be initiated at the onset of symptoms.

What are heat cramps and what is the treatment?

Heat cramps are painful spasms of skeletal muscles in the arms, legs and/or abdomen. A person experiencing these symptoms should be moved to a cooler place and given cool water to drink.

What are the symptoms of heat exhaustion and what is the treatment?

The symptoms of heat exhaustion include profuse sweating, headache, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, rapid heartbeat, and cool moist pale skin. A person experiencing these symptoms should be moved to a cooler place, cool wet cloths should be applied to the person's body, and he/she should be given cool water to drink. If the person is vomiting or refuses to drink, 9-1-1 should be called.

Are certain people or age groups more susceptible to heat-related problems?

Yes, older people and young children are more susceptible to heat-related problems.

How do you prevent heat-related illness?

To prevent heat-related problems, you should wear appropriate lightweight clothing, drink water continuously, and avoid strenuous outdoor activity on hot days. If you have to engage in strenuous outdoor activities, take frequent breaks in a cool place.

Patient First puts the patient first with convenient hours, board-certified physicians, and cost-effective service.

- Open 8 am to 10 pm, 365 days a year
- Walk-in, no appointment necessary
- Staffed by board certified physicians
- Urgent care for routine injuries and illnesses
- Primary care for patients without a regular physician
- X-rays, lab tests and prescription drugs on-site
- Most major insurance plans accepted – your claims filed for you
- Occupational Health services

Visit patientfirst.com for physician schedules, center locations, and more information.



Scan to find your nearest Patient First Neighborhood Medical Center

Connect with us:

