



Cancer
Council
NSW

10 Myths about Sun Protection



Cancer Council Helpline 13 11 20
www.cancerCouncil.com.au

1

You don't get sunburnt on cool or cloudy days

False:

UV radiation that causes sunburn can be just as high on cool or cloudy days as it is on sunny ones. You can't see or feel UV radiation so check the SunSmart UV Alert every day and protect your skin when UV levels are 3 or above. The UV Alert is available in the weather section of most newspapers or at www.cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart

2

You don't need to use sunscreen because your foundation or moisturiser has sunscreen in it

False:

Foundation and moisturiser with sunscreen are fine if you are outside for short periods. Most cosmetic products offer protection that is lower than the recommended SPF30+. So for longer periods outside use a separate sunscreen and reapply every 2 hours – not just once in the morning.

3

People with olive skin are not at risk of skin cancer

False:

Anyone who grows up in Australia can be at risk of skin cancer. People with dark skin or who tan easily have a lower risk than people with fair skin that burns easily, but they are still at risk of skin damage and skin cancer.

4

Sunbeds (solariums) are a safe way to tan

False:

Sunbeds emit UV radiation that can be stronger than the midday sun. Using a sunbed can significantly increase your risk of melanoma and other skin cancers. There is no safe way to tan.

5

Chemicals in sunscreen are bad for you

False:

There is currently no scientific evidence that chemicals used in sunscreen (including nanoparticles) pose a health risk. Sunscreen helps protect skin from UV damage that can increase your risk of skin cancer. For best protection always use sunscreen with other sun protection measures like wearing a broad brim hat and protective clothing and seeking shade.

6 Fake tan protects your skin from the sun

False: Fake tan colours your skin on the surface. While some fake tan products contain sunscreen, the protection lasts only a few hours. You still need to use sun protection.

7 You don't have to be concerned about skin cancer because, if it happens, its easy to see and easy to treat

False: Treating skin cancer isn't always easy. Some skin cancers can spread to other parts of your body and be fatal. Remember – more than 1800 people die from skin cancer in Australia every year. Treatment can include surgery and result in permanent scarring. Get to know your own skin and see your GP immediately if you notice any changes.

8 Only people who sunbake get skin cancer

False: Sunbaking is a high-risk activity for skin cancer. But you are also exposed to UV radiation while walking the dog, gardening or running errands. In fact, most people get sunburnt when they are not deliberately seeking a tan.

9 If your skin tans but doesn't burn, you don't need to bother with sun protection

False: A suntan is a sign of sun damage. Your skin turns brown because the UV rays are damaging the cells below. Even if you tan easily, you are still at risk of skin cancer and need to use sun protection.

10 Glass block UV radiation

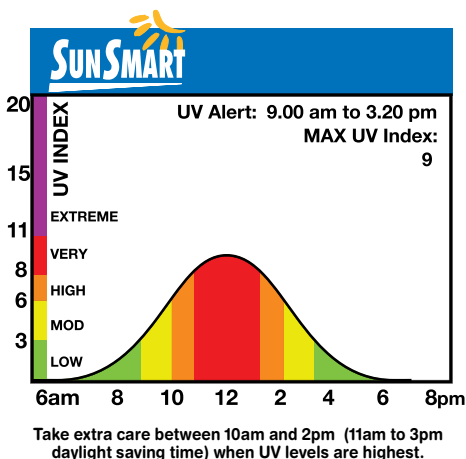
False: Glass reduces but does not block UV radiation, so you can still get burnt sitting next to a window. Laminated windscreens, clear or tinted film on (side) car or on house windows can provide protection depending on the quality of the product. You can further reduce your risk by keeping windows closed as well as wearing sunscreen and shirts with a high neckline and long sleeves when driving.

SunSmart UV Alert:

The SunSmart UV Alert shows:

- The hours of each day when the UV Index will be 3 or above
- The maximum UV forecast for the day.

In the example below the SunSmart UV Alert is from 9am to 3.20pm. This means that between these times UV levels will be 3 and above – strong enough to damage your skin – and sun protection should be used.



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For more information:

SunSmart Infoline:
(02) 9334 1761

Website:
cancercouncil.com.au/sunsmart