

# Fun in the Sun

Summer is the perfect time to start getting active; there's just so much to do! New foods are in season, the swimming pools all open, and the kids are out of school. Be careful outside though, the sun is out and burns are likely.

## The Sun, it Burns!

Sun burns can be extremely annoying. They hurt for days, age your skin, *and* they put you at a higher risk for skin cancer. There are many different ways to prevent sunburns, such as by:

- Staying out of the sun during peak hours
  - Peak sun hours are from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. This is when the sun's UV rays are strongest, whether it's cloudy outside or not.
- Remembering to reapply sunscreen every few hours (or right after you've gone swimming)
  - You can't apply one coat of sunscreen and expect it to work all day. Even sunscreens that are 'water-proof' will eventually wear off if you go swimming.



- Wearing hats to protect your scalp and face from direct contact with the sun

- Choose a hat with a wide brim for maximum protection. They'll also help shield your eyes from the sun.



- Wearing chap stick or Vaseline to prevent burning your lips
  - There's nothing manly about skin cancer, and your lips are actually one of the most likely places to get burnt.
- Getting more Vitamin D through foods like milk or margarine

- A lot of Canadian dairy products have Vitamin D in them, which helps build up your immunity to UV rays. Vitamin D can also be found in rice or soy beverages.



- Rubbing coconut oil into your skin
  - This should be done before you go out in the sun. It's used in many South American countries as a cheaper form of sun block.

There are also many different ways to *treat* sunburns, such as by:

- Staying hydrated
  - It's important to stay hydrated because any type of burn will take fluids away from the rest of your body.
- Taking an aspirin or ibuprofen pill as soon as you get burnt
  - This reduces the swelling, redness, and pain associated with getting a sun burn.



- Applying aloe vera religiously.
  - Aloe vera is a plant imported from Africa. You can grow it yourself (it's easy to grow) or you can buy aloe gel from a drug store. It helps with regular burns as well.



- Freezing cubes of milk to rub over the affected area
  - This mostly just helps soothe the pain from the burn. The proteins in milk have an anti-inflammatory effect.
- Rubbing the area with a green tea bag or a cucumber
  - Both of these have antioxidant properties which promote healing. Make sure the green tea bag is cool before you use it though!
- Taking a cold bath
  - Taking a cold shower could hurt a lot, especially if you're sun burn is severe enough that you're forming blisters.

