

STAY YOUNG AND ENJOY SUMMER FUN WITHOUT FEAR OF THE SUN

For those of us who live in the Northeast, summertime gives us the long-awaited opportunity to enjoy all that the outdoors has to offer. We can spend hours under the sun with friends and family in our favorite parks and outdoor cafés. We look forward to weekends packed with outdoor activities, or just lounging around outside. Unfortunately all of this added exposure to the sun may come at a price. Ultraviolet (UV) rays damage the skin's makeup and irreversible harm can be inflicted on the skin's DNA, leading to the weathered, wrinkled faces we all fear. And in a worst-case scenario, skin cancer may arise. Here's how to get the most out of the summer sun without letting it adversely affect your skin.

GET PROTECTION!

Sunscreen/block is the best aid to use if you want to increase your sun exposure time. Sunscreen, which works by chemically absorbing the sun's ultraviolet radiation, is usually a light lotion, cream or gel that needs to be re-applied about every two hours. Lotions have been around since the 1930s, and the sun protective factor (SPF) ratings that we use today were put into practice in 1962. Unfortunately, that was about the same time suburban moms started wrapping tin foil around album covers in their backyards. The higher the SPF number, the longer amount of protection time a sunscreen provides. Even more, SPF rating calculates the *amount* of lotion recommended to ensure protection; however, it's not strictly based on the amount of time you spend in the sun. There are other variables to weigh, such as the time of day, skin type and lotion wearing off during activities like swimming. All these factors can change the amount of time it takes to suffer sunburn.

Sunblock, like zinc oxide, acts to physically block the sun's rays from hitting the skin. A person who is 5-feet, 4-inches tall and weighs 150 pounds should apply one ounce of sunscreen evenly to their body. Larger individuals should scale up from there. On average most people use less amounts than recommended, which diminishes the SPF value. Err on the side of safety and use high-intensity protection when you expect to be under the sun for hours. And, remember to reapply frequently!

QUALIFIED DAMAGE CONTROL

If sun damage has already taken place and your face is sagging toward your feet—don't go to a podiatrist! Make your way to a board-certified plastic surgeon. Today's plastic surgery has many ingenious solutions to combat skin sagging. Face-lifting involves tightening facial tissues on different levels to achieve tighter skin. Substances can also be added, or problem areas filled, to allow your face to have the healthy fullness associated with youth. Evidence of the procedure is hidden in the natural creases around the ear. The majority of face-lifts today are done with a natural, age-appropriate result in mind—*not* like some of the extreme examples seen with celebrities.

WILL THIS LAST?

On average, the effects of these procedures last many years, although gravity will eventually result in re-sagging of tissues at some point. But a face-lift turns back the hands of time and your face will be in a better position than if it hadn't been tightened. As with any procedure, however, there are risks involved and these need to be discussed between the doctor and patient.

—DONALD ROLAND, M.D.

Board-Certified Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon

SKIN-SAVING STRATEGIES

Daily use of sunscreen is vital to maintaining beautiful, healthy skin as well as protecting your health. Every year, more than 3.5 million cases of skin cancer are diagnosed, making it the most common form of human cancer. Malignant melanoma affected over 68,000 Americans last year, causing 8,700 deaths. Early detection and surgical removal of melanoma is the only way to prevent related death. Look for a sunscreen with "broad spectrum" or UVA/UVB on the label. UVB rays cause sunburn and skin cancer; UVA rays cause tanning (which is a sign of skin damage). Additionally, UVB rays damage the skin's elastic tissue, causing wrinkles. An effective sunscreen should have an SPF of at least 15, although I recommend at least 30. Apply at least every two hours to the entire body, including the ears and feet. Daily use will help protect the skin even more.

Every person should see a dermatologist annually to detect skin cancer at its earliest stages. Advanced techniques called dermoscopy and confocal microscopy aid in early skin cancer diagnosis, at its most curable stage, and prevent unnecessary biopsy. Take care of your skin and it will take care of you.

—ALBERT M. LEFKOVITS, M.D., P.C.

Clinical professor of Dermatology at Mount Sinai School of Medicine

FACE
Forward

Photographed by Lana De Doncker. Shot on location at The Visionaire Condominium. Makeup by Lindsay Jones. Hair by Dakota Herman for L'oreal Professional Mousse Volupte.