



## Fact Sheet

### Cover up – protect against sun damage

Enjoy the summer sun with your children, but be sure to protect against sun damage. Most skin cancers are caused by unprotected sun exposure in childhood and adolescence. In fact, 80% of a person's sun exposure occurs before they turn 21. Melanoma, the deadliest skin cancer, often strikes people who suffered sunburns, especially in childhood.

To protect your family against sun damage, wear hats, cotton clothing with a tight weave, and sunglasses that block 99-100% of both UVB and UVA rays. Avoid the sun at peak hours (10 am – 4pm) and stay in the shade. Wear sunscreen with “broad spectrum” protection and an SPF of at least 15, even on cloudy days. Apply it 30 minutes before swimming, and every 2 hours while swimming. Using sunscreen regularly can reduce the risk of skin cancer dramatically.

Babies under six months old should be kept out of direct sunlight. They have thinner skin and burn more quickly than children and adults do. If you take an infant outside, dress her in lightweight clothing that covers her arms and legs. Put a brimmed hat on him, and keep him in the shade.

If sunburn does occur, it can usually be treated with a cold compress and pain relievers, never butter or ice. Talk to your healthcare provider for specific guidance.

Learn more by visiting [www.phelpscountyhealth.com](http://www.phelpscountyhealth.com), Facebook, Twitter, or by calling (573) 458-6010. The Phelps/Maries County Health Department – caring for your family, caring for our community, caring for YOU!



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.



Phelps/Maries County Health Dept

200 N Main, Suite G51, Rolla, MO 65401

(573) 458-6010 office

[www.phelpscountyhealth.com](http://www.phelpscountyhealth.com)