

## Wellness Articles

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An archive of past wellness articles is available at <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/9966.asp>

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**Proposed publication date:** Week of July 16, 2018

**Content provided by:** Alberta Health Services – written by Alex St. Cyr

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## Here comes the sun (screen)

Ah, the lazy, hazy days of summer. The sun shines brightly—and strongly. When it does, these tips will make your time in the sun safer.

Check the UV index, which measures sun strength. You can be sunburned in as little as 15 minutes. When the UV index is between 3 and 8, everyone, especially kids, needs sunscreen. If it's above 8, these tips will reduce your risk of sunburn as well as heat rash, heat stroke and, over time, skin cancer.

### Safety tips

- Cover up: Wear wide-brimmed hats, UV-blocking sunglasses and thin light-coloured clothing
- Limit the rays: Take frequent breaks in the shade or indoors
- Apply and re-apply sunscreen: Put it on every two hours (at least). Match the sun protective factor (SPF) to the UV index and your skin's sensitivity to sunlight. Babies have thin skin and can burn easily. Keep them out of the sun. Use an SPF 30 lip balm on your lips.
- Stay hydrated: Bring lots of water with you when spending time outside, and drink often, before you're thirsty
- Car safety: Never leave your child or pet alone in a car. Your car can heat up quickly, even on days that do not seem very warm.

Try to stay out of the sun between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., when the sun's rays are strongest and the UV Index is at its highest.