

PROTECTION UNDER THE SUN

BY: TANIA MANGUAL-MONZÓN, BSHE, MS

During the summer we enjoy a lot of outdoor activities. Some people only think about solar protection when they spend an entire day at the beach, river, or pool. However, sun exposure accumulates every day, even on cloudy days.

People who get a lot of ultraviolet radiation exposure have a greater risk of suffering from skin cancer. Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer. More than 3.5 million people are diagnosed every year in the United States.

PROTECT YOURSELF AND CONTINUE TO HAVE FUN UNDER THE SUN BY PRACTICING THE FOLLOWING PROTECTION MEASURES:



Wear long-sleeved shirts.

Apply sun block 15 minutes before going out in the sun so the skin can absorb it, and then reapply it every 2 hours. Make sure that it has UVA and UVB protection and a waterproof solar protection factor (SPF) of 30 or more. Don't forget the lips; there are some lip balms available with protection.

Cover yourself with a wide-brimmed hat to protect exposed areas such as your ears, eyes, forehead, nose, and scalp.

Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes and the skin around them.

The infants' and toddlers' skins require special attention. Infants under the age of six months should avoid direct sun exposure. Protect them with clothing that covers most of their skin. Frequent sunburns in children can increase the risk of some types of skin cancer many years, even decades, later.

If you find something suspicious in your skin, share it with your physician and clear up any doubts you may have. You can also take photos of the areas to share with your physician during your visit and see if the area is changing.

The risk of suffering from skin cancer can be reduced by taking protective measures and identifying it in its early states, when it is more treatable.