



Sunscreen Sense- The Safer Alternative?

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While it is obvious that using some form of sun protection is necessary and helpful to our skin, you may want to think twice before lathering up with “regular” or synthetic sunscreens.

Despite years of sunscreen use, melanoma and other forms of skin cancer are on the rise.

Studies have shown that the ingredients in these sunscreens are chemicals that can cause the production of free radicals. Free radicals damage healthy cells and can lead to chronic disease such as cancer and cardiovascular conditions.

Studies have shown that when these chemicals are exposed to heat (ie of the sun) the production of free radicals increases.

As far back as the 1970s, Professor Howard Maibach discovered that as much as 35% of sunscreen does enter into the bloodstream and the longer it is on the skin the more is absorbed

Benzophenone and oxybenzone (benzophene 3) are chemicals used in many sunscreens. They are among the most powerful free radical generators known.

In a study conducted at Queens University in Northern Ireland, scientists found that 2-phenylbenzimidazole-5-sulfonic acid (PBSA), an ingredient found in some sunscreens, damaged DNA when exposed to light.

Triethanolamine (TEA) is another chemical found in many sunscreens. When applied topically to mice, an increase in liver and kidney tumor was noted. Dr. Loren Pickart, whose website discusses the dangers of chemical sunscreen, says scientists have known all along that chemical sunscreens produce dangerous free radicals:

While recognizing the potentially toxic effects of synthetic sunscreens, it would be unwise to expose the skin to the summer sun without any protection.

The safer alternative is to use a sunscreen that has natural ingredients which are actually supportive to the skin, while at the same time providing protection against harmful UV rays. There are several lines of organic or natural sunscreen available at most health food stores and even some pharmacies or grocery stores.



These natural products have ingredients which both block the harmful rays of the sun, while providing anti-oxidants and vitamins to nourish the skin. Furthermore, a natural sunscreen will not deposit any harmful chemicals into our ecosystem.

Should you or your child experience a sunburn, the homeopathic remedy, Cantharis 30C is often very helpful in reducing the discomfort, heat and duration of the burn. Also, helpful is applying fresh aloe vera gel and pure Calendula ointment. All of these are available in most health food stores.

Don't be afraid of the sun! As long as you try to avoid those times of day when the sun is strongest, wear a natural sunscreen, and eat a diet rich in veggies and fruits which provide necessary anti-oxidants that protect the skin from cellular damage, you can enjoy the sun.

The sun enables our body to synthesize Vitamin D, a key nutrient particularly for the absorption of calcium. The sun also enhances immune function and makes us feel happy (both keys to preventing disease)

Enjoy the sun, but be sun-smart...the natural way!