

## More facts about UV radiation and skin cancer

- UV Index levels vary across Australia on any given day.
- There are three types of UV radiation: UVA, UVB and UVC.
  - UVA is principally responsible for ageing of the skin
  - UVB and UVA are key contributors for skin cancer
  - UVC is blocked by the ozone layer
- Too much exposure to UV radiation and the number of sunburns experienced, especially during childhood, increases your risk of skin cancer.
- Exposure to UV radiation enables the body to produce vitamin D, an important nutrient in bone development and maintenance. A balance is required between UV radiation exposure for vitamin D production and protecting the skin from damage and skin cancer.
- Most people achieve adequate vitamin D levels through UVB exposure during typical day-to-day outdoor activities. In summer you just need to expose your face, arms and hands or the equivalent area of skin for a few minutes of sunlight each day on either side of the peak UV periods. Naturally dark skinned individuals need longer exposure. If you are concerned about your vitamin D levels please see your doctor for advice.
- Solariums are not a safe way of tanning and should be avoided.

### More information

#### **Australian Radiation Protection And Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA)**

[www.arpansa.gov.au/uvindex/daily/ausuvindex.htm](http://www.arpansa.gov.au/uvindex/daily/ausuvindex.htm)

Realtime UV levels for capital cities are available at [www.arpansa.gov.au/uvindex/realtime/index.cfm](http://www.arpansa.gov.au/uvindex/realtime/index.cfm)

**Bureau of Meteorology** [www.bom.gov.au/weather/uv](http://www.bom.gov.au/weather/uv)

**Cancer Council** [www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart](http://www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart)

Click on the link to your state or territory or call the Cancer Council Helpline on 13 11 20.

**World Health Organization** [www.who.int/uv/intersunprogramme/activities/uv\\_index/en/](http://www.who.int/uv/intersunprogramme/activities/uv_index/en/)

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**YOUR DAILY GUIDE TO  
SUN PROTECTION**

## UV radiation

Australia has one of the highest incidence rates of skin cancer in the world. Two in three Australians will get skin cancer before the age of 70. Over 1600 Australians die from skin cancer each year.

Too much ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun can cause sunburn, skin damage, eye damage and skin cancer.

You can see sunlight and feel infrared radiation (heat), but you cannot see or feel UV radiation. UV radiation can be high even on cool and overcast days, so don't rely on clear skies or high temperatures to determine when you need to protect yourself from the sun.

## What is the SunSmart UV Alert?

The SunSmart UV Alert is a tool you can use to protect yourself from UV radiation. It tells you the time during that day you need to be SunSmart.

The SunSmart UV Alert times are issued throughout the year by the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) when the UV Index is forecast to reach 3 or above. Above this level, UV radiation can damage your skin and eyes and may lead to skin cancer. So whenever SunSmart UV Alert times apply, you need to use sun protection.

The SunSmart UV Alert is reported in the weather page of all major Australian daily newspapers, on the BOM website for over 300 locations across Australia, via pocket news on your mobile and on some television and radio broadcasts.

It is based on the Global Solar UV Index, a rating system adopted from the World Health Organization.

## When should I use the SunSmart UV Alert?

Check for the SunSmart UV Alert times when:

- Planning or participating in an outdoor activity or event
- Involved in recreational activities such as running, swimming, cycling or team sports
- Watching a spectator sport, such as tennis or cricket
- Working outdoors, or have responsibility for outdoor workers, or
- Responsible for children or adolescents and their outdoor activities.

When SunSmart UV Alert times apply, you need to be SunSmart during the period indicated.

## Be SunSmart and protect yourself in five ways from skin cancer

Whenever the UV Index level reaches 3 or above, the Cancer Council recommends you take five simple steps to protect yourself.



**Slip on some sun-protective clothing** that covers as much skin as possible.



**Slap on SPF30+ sunscreen.** Make sure it is broad spectrum and water resistant. Put it on 20 minutes before you go outdoors and every two hours afterwards. Sunscreen should never be used to extend the time you spend in the sun.



**Slap on a hat** that protects your face, head, neck and ears.



**Seek shade.**



**Slide on some sunglasses.** Make sure they meet the Australian Standard (AS 1067).

Remember to always use a combination of the five sun protection measures when UV levels are 3 or above – never rely on just one.

**Extra care should always be taken between 10am and 3pm when UV Index levels are most intense.**

