



When is a
sunscreen
not just a
sunscreen?
When it
moisturises
and offers
anti-ageing
properties
too. By
**Joanna
Hall.**

SAVING face



For many people, sunscreen is something they dust off and throw in their beach bag each summer.

And of course you should take extra special care of your skin as the weather warms up. But it's vital to remember that the sun can damage your skin all year round.

Even when it's overcast and cool, you are at risk of developing telltale signs of premature ageing: wrinkles, freckles, fine lines, and broken capillaries, for starters.

But sun exposure also puts us at a higher risk of something far more serious – the development of certain types of skin cancer.

According to Sydney plastic surgeon and skin cancer specialist, Dr Mark Edinburg, the incidence of skin cancer is continuing to rise in Australia for a number of reasons.

“Part of the reason for this rise is our lifestyle and the increase in general prosperity,” Dr Edinburg says.

“These factors lead to increased exposure to the sun as a result of changing fashion, increased leisure time with sport, outdoor social activities such as barbecues, and an increased attendance at the beach.”

According to Dr Edinburg, 90 per cent of skin cancers occur in sun-exposed areas of the body.

“We know that the presence of skin cancer is increased in people who spend more time outdoors, and in people who have less pigmentation,” he says.

“But there are also other causes of skin cancer. They include trauma, burn scars, chronic leg ulcers, previous exposure to radiotherapy, a suppressed immune system for those who suffer from this, and exposure to certain chemicals.”

One of the most exposed areas of our bodies is our face, and it's often the first area of skin to show telltale signs of ageing. It's also the highest risk area for non-melanoma skin cancers – both basal cell carcinomas (BCCs) and squamous cell carcinomas (SCCs).

In fact, the highest rates for these types of cancer are found on the nasolabial folds

(the fold running from the side of the nose to the corner of the mouth), the eyelids, and the skin of the lip, followed by the ears, nose and cheeks.

Wearing a sunscreen whenever you go outside is very important. Dr Edinburg rates it number four in his list of the five most important things you can do to prevent skin cancer. The others are: staying indoors during the middle of the day, always seeking shade, covering up, and wearing sunglasses.

TRUTH ABOUT SUNSCREEN

But the truth is not everyone likes wearing sunscreens away from the beach, especially on the face.

Sunscreen can feel like yet another layer to add to an already cluttered beauty regime, especially if you already use an array of skincare products.

Other complaints include how sunscreen feels on the skin, and that it doesn't sit well under make-up. The worst offenders are formulas with a higher SPF factor, which can be heavy or sticky.

On top of this, for some people, is the issue of sensitivity. All sunscreens are chemical cocktails that contain preservatives, chemicals, and sometimes fragrances that can irritate skin or cause breakouts.

According to a position statement put out by The Cancer Council of Australia and The Australasian College of Dermatologists, chemicals in sunscreen are classified as chemical filters (cinnamates, benzophenones and salicylates), or physical filters (titanium oxide and zinc oxide), and they work in different ways.

Chemical filters work by binding with cells in the skin, absorbing UV radiation and dispersing it as heat before it can damage the cells. Physical filters contain microscopic particles that sit on the surface of the skin and act as a physical barrier. Sunscreen can contain one or the other, or both.

Thanks to advances in technology, several beauty brands have been working to resolve some of these issues, and the result is a new generation of sunscreens.



Mandy Gray, of True Solutions International, says that sunscreens now need to provide broad spectrum protection: "This means protection not only against UVB, or burning rays, but also deeper penetrating UVA rays."

These new products also irritate less, or boast formulas for sensitive skin, as well as active anti-ageing and moisturising properties. This enables consumers to roll several "layers" of their beauty regime into one.

Gray agrees with Dr Edinburg that sunscreen should be an essential part of everyone's daily beauty regime. "Sunscreen application is like dressing your skin," she says.

But she says it's also important to apply the right kind of sunscreen in the correct manner.

"If you are inside all day, you still need protection from incidental exposure, but a moisturiser with SPF15 is sufficient," Gray says. "But if you have prolonged outdoor exposure, you will need to reapply sunscreen every two hours."

Sunscreen Tips

All sunscreen products should have an expiration date. Don't use a sunscreen if it is out of date.

If you have highly sensitive skin, try a baby sunscreen or a sunscreen without fragrance.

Sunscreens come in many varieties including creams, lotions, milks or gels. Choose the one that best suits your skin type and your type of activity.

Apply sunscreen 20 minutes before you go outside. Adults should apply at least a teaspoon of sunscreen to the face, not forgetting the face and neck.

Reapply sunscreen every two hours when you are outdoors for the best protection.

Remember that sunscreen shouldn't be used as the first line of protection, or so you can stay out in the sun longer.

Visit our website for more tips on staying safe in the sun this summer.

TRY THESE MOISTURISING SUNSCREENS

- 1 Jan Marini Antioxidant Daily Face Protectant (\$76/60g).** Features "PhytoMelanin" plant extract technology for greater protection, together with powerful antioxidants and a hydrating complex.
- 2 Ella Baché Great 30+ Facesaver (\$34/50ml).** Offers broad-spectrum SPF 30+ sun protection against UVA, UVB and infra-red rays, combined with vitamin E, green tea and grape polyphenols to fight free radicals.
- 3 Dermalogica Daylight Defense System Extra Rich Faceblock SPF30 (\$62/50ml), Daylight Defense System Oil Free Matte Block SPF20 (\$59/50ml), and Daylight Defense Super Sensitive Faceblock SPF30 (\$59/50ml).** These products use "UV Smart Booster Technology", which safeguard active vitamins and then burst open upon contact with UV rays.
- 4 Nivea Age Defence Moisturising Facial Sunscreen Lotion SPF30+ (\$9.95/50ml).** Contains a high protection UVA/UVB filter system, and is also enriched with vitamin E to help combat free radicals.
- 5 True Solutions All Day Moisture SPF30 tinted or untinted (\$50/100ml), and Total Age Protector SPF30+ (\$50/100ml).** Luxurious daily use moisturising creams combining active moisturising ingredients with broad-spectrum sun protection.
- 6 Sensense Anti-Ageing Face Moisturiser (\$16/100ml).** Combines a broad-spectrum SPF 30+ sunscreen with alpha hydroxy acids, vitamin B3 and vitamin E to help prevent the signs of premature ageing.
- 7 Cosmedicine Honest Face Skin Tint and Treatment SPF20 (\$55/40 ml).** A lightweight all-in-one tinted face finisher packed with antioxidants and broad-spectrum UVA/UVB sunscreens.
- 8 Clarins Sun Control Cream For Face SPF15 (\$38/75 ml), and Sun Control Cream For Fair Skin SPF20 (\$40/200 ml).** Features "Phyto-Sunactyl 2", to optimise cellular defences against UV rays, added to a high performance filter system for UVA and UVB protection.