



# SUNSMART FACT PACK

*Doing what New Zealanders do  
- in a SunSmart way.*



**SUNSMART**

## HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

Making the most of the outdoors is a big part of Kiwi life. But spending time in the sun means taking measures to protect ourselves. Skin cancer is the most common cancer in this country – even though almost all skin cancers are preventable. Being SunSmart is the best way to reduce dangerous exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UVR) and enjoy the Kiwi outdoor lifestyle.

### Why use this resource?

This Fact Pack is a one-stop guide to being SunSmart. It is simple, easy to use and contains a wealth of information about sun protection. It will give you an all-round understanding of the benefits and risks associated with sun exposure – and how to enjoy the sun safely. The Fact Pack includes information on:

- myths and facts about sun exposure
- the sun protection golden rules: slip, slop, slap and wrap
- UVR and our environment
- melanoma and other skin cancers
- tanning – solariums and self-tan products
- protecting children, communities and outdoor workers from over-exposure to the sun.

### Using this resource in your work

Increasingly, organisations are taking seriously their responsibility for delivering SunSmart initiatives and messages to their staff and communities. This is a great place to start if you are looking for general information on being SunSmart or how best to offer sun protection.

The Fact Pack has tools to help individuals and organisations keep New Zealanders safer from the sun.

We hope this resource will be useful for the media, territorial local authorities, health workers, health promoters, sports trusts, sports clubs, venue managers, event planners and organisers, employers, educational providers and others.

**For more information or queries about this SunSmart Fact Pack resource contact the HSC Sun Safety Programme on 04 472 5777 email [info@hsc.org.nz](mailto:info@hsc.org.nz).**



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## Summer is more fun when you are SunSmart

**SLIP** – into a shirt and slip to some shade, especially between 11am and 4pm when the ultraviolet rays are most fierce.

**SLOP** – on some SPF30+ broad-spectrum sunscreen at least 15 minutes before going outdoors. Reapply regularly.

**SLAP** – on a hat with a wide brim or a cap with flaps.

**WRAP** – on a pair of sunglasses. Choose close fitting wraparound styles.



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## MYTH BUSTERS

**\* It's not possible to get sunburnt on cloudy days.** → **False**

You can get sunburnt on cloudy days as ultraviolet radiation (UVR) penetrates cloud cover. UVR levels can be high, and even increase, due to reflection from clouds.

**\* The wind burnt me, not the sun.** → **False**

It is UVR from the sun that causes skin to burn. Wind lowers the temperature of the air, making it easy to forget that the UVR from the sun is still strong.

**\* I tan easily so my skin is less likely to be damaged.** → **False**

Any exposure to UVR has the potential to cause skin damage. Burning and peeling are signs some damage has already occurred – even if it turns into a tan. The tan you develop won't protect you from the harmful effects of the harsh New Zealand sun.

**\* I can't get sunburnt through glass.** → **False**

Glass reduces but does not block transmission of UVR. People who spend long periods in a car, or next to a window receiving direct sunlight, should use sun protection.

**\* I have had sunburn but now I protect my skin, so I am safe from developing skin cancer.** → **False**

You can't undo damage that may have already occurred to your skin, but you should prevent future sunburn to minimise any further risk.

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**\* Sunscreen blocks out the sun.**

→ **False**

Sunscreen should not be used as a means of staying out in the sun longer. When exposure to the summer sun is unavoidable, sunscreen is the last line of defence to reduce the risk of sun damage to your skin. No sunscreen will completely shield you from the effects of UVR.

**\* People with tans or dark skin don't sunburn.**

→ **False**

If your skin turns brown it is a sign of sun damage – even if there is no redness or peeling. If you tan easily or have dark skin you are still at risk of skin cancer and should use sun protection.

**\* “Burn time” is 20 minutes, therefore I am safe in the sun within this timeframe.**

→ **False**

A time indication for how long it will take your skin to burn is not accurate, so really there is no such thing as “burn time”. People have different skin types and, therefore, some burn more quickly than others. Refer to [www.sunsmart.org.nz](http://www.sunsmart.org.nz) to check the daily UV Index for your area and get personal recommendations for your skin type.

**\* Suntans are healthy.**

→ **False**

There is no such thing as a safe or healthy tan. It does not improve your body's ability to protect yourself from the sun. Some exposure to the sun is healthy so you can get vitamin D, but most people get enough vitamin D through normal daily activity – even when taking sun protection measures.

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## SLIP

### SLIP on some protective clothing and into some shade

- It is important to dress carefully for the summer sun. People often leave their face, neck, arms and legs exposed – areas that commonly burn, and develop melanoma and other skin cancers.

#### What clothing is best?

- Tightly woven fabrics that are dark in colour and non-stretch typically transmit less UVR.
- A wet fabric gives only half as much sun protection as when it is dry.

- Clothing that meets the AS/NZS 44399:1996 standard will carry a label giving an Ultraviolet Protection Factor (UPF). A rating of UPF15 to 24 is good protection, UPF25 to 39 very good protection, and UPF40 to 50+ excellent protection.

#### Shade

Slipping into some shade is also an effective way of preventing sunburn. Solid blocks of shade from dense trees, cars or buildings are best. Umbrellas, tarpaulins and shade cloths are also good options, but some filter out only some UVR, so other SunSmart actions are also advisable.

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# SLOP

## SLOP on some sunscreen

### What is SPF?

- Sunscreens are filters, not blocks. Some UVR still gets through to the skin. Sunscreens have a sun protection factor (SPF) rating. Use SPF30+ broad-spectrum sunscreen.
- Sunscreen should not be used as the only or primary means of protection.

### How is it best applied?

- Apply 20 minutes before skin will be exposed to the sun.
- Apply thickly.
- Re-apply regularly. Sunscreen can be unintentionally rubbed off by towels and clothing.

### Water resistance in sunscreen.

A water resistance claim of two hours means the sunscreen should retain its full SPF protection up to two hours even when



exposed to water. It is recommended, however, that sunscreen is reapplied after any contact with water or after sweating a lot.

### Care of your sunscreen

- Keep sunscreen out of direct sunlight and heat.
- Sunscreen that has been in a bag or glove box where it has been hot needs to be replaced.
- Discard if past the “use by” date.

### Sunscreen and children

- Apply SPF30+ broad spectrum sunscreen 20 minutes before children go out in the sun.
- Reapply every two hours – their active lifestyle means sunscreen rubs off easily through their play.
- Avoid using sunscreen on babies under one year of age (it is best to keep them out of the sun).
- If there is a risk a baby could get sunburnt, apply sunscreen on areas of skin not able to be protected by clothing. If their skin reacts, do not continue to use.

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## SLAP

### SLAP on a hat

People get sunburnt around the head and face more than any other part of the body. The best way to avoid sunburn to these areas is to apply sunscreen and wear a good hat.

### Which hat is best?

- Made from a tightly woven fabric.
- Brimmed (or has long side and back flaps) to shade the face, nose, neck and ears.
- Dark in colour (dark colours typically transmit less UVR).
- Comfortable and cool, but firm around the head to stay on in the wind.
- One you like and feel good wearing!

## WRAP

### WRAP some glasses over those eyes

#### Why do we need sunglasses?

Eyes and the sensitive skin around them can be damaged if exposed to too much direct sun. While cancer of the eyes is rare, basal cell carcinoma of the surrounding skin is relatively common. In addition, UVR is associated with cataracts and a condition known as pterygium. UVR also causes the short-term condition known as snow blindness.

#### What to consider

- Consider lenses that cut out a high percentage of UVR. Look out for an eye protection factor (EPF) rating of 10 – indicating absorption of 95 to 99 percent of UVR.

- Glasses that are close fitting and with large lenses are good. The best protection is provided by wrap-around styles.
- Sunglasses that conform to AS/NZS 1067:2003.
- Those labelled “general purpose” offer good UVR protection, while those labelled “specific purpose” give the best protection.

### Sunglasses and children

- Children’s eyes are easily damaged by UVR as their lenses change and develop until they are about 18 years old. There is evidence that over-exposure to UVR early in life can cause a predisposition to eye problems later on.

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## UVR

### What is Ultraviolet radiation?

Ultraviolet radiation (UVR) is the invisible rays that are part of the energy that comes from the sun. The rays are made up of three parts: UVA, UVB and UVC. UVR isn't warm – we neither feel it nor see it – but it is known to cause sunburn, skin damage, skin cancer and eye damage. It can also affect the body's immune system.

### When is UVR at its highest?

- The amount of UVR varies throughout the day. UVR is at its highest when the sun is at its highest in the sky.
- On a cloud-free day the maximum UVR level in New Zealand occurs around 1.30pm – even though the maximum temperature usually occurs later in the day.
- At times UVR can be higher on bright, cloudy days than on clear days, as it is reflected from the edges of clouds.

- The summer months – especially December and January – have the highest risk; although protection is needed from 11am to 4pm during the daylight saving months.

### The need for UVR protection in New Zealand

Outdoor activity is a big part of our culture in New Zealand – gardening, BBQs, sports, time at the beach. We can enjoy our lifestyle as well as protecting ourselves from the damaging effects of the sun.

New Zealand's UVR can be extremely high for several reasons. The earth is closest to the sun during December and January, the Southern Hemisphere summer. We have less ozone in the atmosphere. Our smog-free air means we have less pollution to block out UVR.

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## The ozone layer

- Ozone is found throughout the atmosphere and acts like a giant shield against the sun's harmful rays.
- The natural balance between the processes that make ozone and those that destroy it has been upset. Human-made chemicals (such as halons and chlorofluorocarbons) have increased the rate at which ozone is destroyed.

## Ultraviolet Index

- MetService and the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) produce daily forecasts for the

amount of UVR expected around New Zealand. They use the Ultraviolet index (UVI) which is an international standard applying to all skin types.

- The UVI assesses the sunburn danger on a scale from 0 to 11+. The higher the number the higher the danger.
- SunSmart behaviour is recommended from UVI level three and above.
- The UVI varies from place to place in New Zealand and also varies throughout the day.
- During the summer, the UVI is broadcast on television and radio, and is printed in newspapers. An up-to-date UVI can be obtained from:

[www.sunsmart.org.nz](http://www.sunsmart.org.nz)

[www.metservice.co.nz](http://www.metservice.co.nz)

[www.niwa.co.nz/services/free/uvozone](http://www.niwa.co.nz/services/free/uvozone)



### 1-2 LOW

**No protection required.**

You can safely stay outside.

### 3-5 MODERATE

**Protection required** when spending long periods in the sun.

### 6-7 HIGH

**Protection essential.**

Slip, Slop, Slap and Wrap.

### 8-10 VERY HIGH

**Seek shade.**

Slip, Slop, Slap and Wrap. Re-apply sunscreen regularly.

### 11+ EXTREME

**Reschedule outdoor activities for early morning & evening.**

Full protection essential.

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## SNOW AND WATER

### Snow and alpine activity

On a sunny day the whiteness of snow can reflect up to 85 to 90 percent of UVR, which increases the risk of burning to the skin. You can still get sunburnt even though the temperature is cooler.

The higher the altitude, the greater the risk of sunburn because there is less atmosphere to filter UVR. Generally, for each 1000m height gained, the danger is increased up to 10 percent. It is vitally important to protect yourself from sunburn when undertaking activity in the mountains.

### Snow blindness

- Snow blindness can occur when eyes are not protected around snow.
- On ski fields UVI values are up to 30 percent higher than at sea level due to the high altitude and increased reflection.
- The eyes may feel like they are burning, irritated, gritty and water profusely.
- Wearing sunglasses or goggles will decrease the chance of this damage occurring. Close-fitting, wrap-around sunglasses can protect the eyes from direct sunlight as well as from the UVR that is reflected off the slopes.

### Water

When on or in the water people are exposed to UVR from the sky as well as the UVR reflected from the water. To avoid the harshest sun, visits to the beach/rivers/lakes and outdoor swimming pools could be made before 11am or after 4pm in the afternoon.

Many swimsuits leave a lot of skin exposed to the sun, particularly the back of the neck, shoulders and arms. Swimsuits designed specifically for sun protection, which cover the body from the upper thighs to the upper arms, are recommended. It is recommended swimsuits with a protective rating of at least UPF15-24 are used.

### Considerations

- When out of the water cover up with a shirt, towel and sunhat, and sit in the shade.
- Avoid unnecessary exposure to the sun and remember to reapply sunscreen.
- When wet, fabrics can lose 50 percent of the sun protection they offer.

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## Skin cancer in New Zealand – some facts

- Skin cancer is largely preventable yet New Zealand and Australia have the highest rates of skin cancer in the world.
- The major cause of skin cancer is exposure to Ultraviolet radiation (UVR).
- Skin cancer is the most common cancer affecting New Zealanders.
- In 2005 (the most recent year for which data are available) there were 68 deaths in men and 34 deaths in women from non-melanoma skin cancers in New Zealand.
- Each year approximately 60,000 new cases of other skin cancers are confirmed.
- Costing the health system \$57 million a year, skin cancer is one of New Zealand's most expensive cancers.
- There is a huge social cost of loss of enjoyment of life and early death.
- Because these cancers are on the skin, they are visible and relatively easy to detect in their early stages.

## Melanoma

- Is the least common but the most serious form of skin cancer.
- Being sunburnt under the age of 20 years increases the risk of developing melanoma.
- Melanoma is the fourth most common cancer in New Zealand.
- Each year approximately 270 people die from melanoma skin cancer.
- The number of cases of melanoma has doubled in the past 30 years to about 2000 cases per year.
- In 2005 melanoma was the most common cancer among males 25-44 years old and among females aged 15-24 years.
- The risk of melanoma increases as you get older.

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### What is melanoma?

The first sign of melanoma is the appearance of a new spot on the skin or any change in the colour, size or shape of an existing freckle or mole. It may have flecks of brown, black, blue or red in it, or in some cases no colour. Melanoma is not usually painful in its early stages. Later signs are a spot, freckle or mole that is itchy, tender, bleeds or has a crust. Some melanoma develops in weeks or months and can spread rapidly if left untreated. If detected and diagnosed early the treatment is usually successful.

### Who can get melanoma?

Anyone who has had sunburn and intermittent exposure to UVR can develop melanoma. Those most likely at risk of developing melanoma have:

- very fair or freckled skin
- a large number of moles or freckles, larger than 5mm, which are an irregular shape and irregular colour

- others in their family who have had melanoma
- a lot of sun exposure – through their work or recreational activities
- previous sunburn and intermittent acute exposure especially during childhood or adolescence
- sunbathed or used sun beds (solarium).

### How does it develop?

Direct sun exposure is related to the development of melanomas, however melanomas can also occur on covered areas of the body. It is thought that UVR on any part of the skin affects the cells that make melanin in the skin throughout the whole body.

### How to prevent melanoma?

If people protect their skin from exposure to UVR and avoid sunburn, especially younger children and teenagers, most melanoma can be prevented. Following the SunSmart actions, slip, slop, slap and wrap, will dramatically reduce the chances of skin damage.



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## Non-melanoma skin cancers

Non-melanoma skin cancers are far more common than melanoma. However, they tend to be less serious than melanoma (as long as they are treated).

**Basal cell carcinoma (BCC)** is the most common skin cancer (about three-quarters of all skin cancers). It presents as a pale, red or pearly, smooth lump usually on the face or neck. It is the least dangerous type of skin cancer but can be serious if left untreated. BCC is most common in people over 40 but can develop in younger people.

**Squamous cell carcinoma (SCC)** is another form of skin cancer. It presents as a raised, crusty, non-healing sore, which often appears on hands, forearms, face or neck. It can be more serious than BCC because it can spread to other parts of the body. If found early it is easily treated. SCC is most common in people over 40.

**Sun spots (solar keratoses)** are skin damage revealed by flat, red or sometimes brown, scaling spots. These spots have a high risk of developing into skin cancer. Sun spots are usually found on parts of the body which have had many years of exposure to sun, such as the face and hands. They are

most common in fairer skinned people over 40 who have a history of high exposure to the sun.

## Our skin

- It is believed that over 80 percent of all damage done to the skin is done by the sun.
- Skin contains a chemical called melanin. Melanin reacts to UVA rays when sunlight comes into contact with the skin, helping the body reflect and absorb the light. The skin begins to tan as melanin levels rise.
- A tan is the first sign of skin damage. As the skin attempts to protect itself, it increases the level of melanin.

## Skin types

- Skin is often categorised into 'types' (see table over page), with type 1 being the fairest and most likely to burn, and type 6 being the darkest and least likely to burn.
- Often people misinterpret their own skin type. For example, believing they have a darker skin type than they actually do and, therefore, better natural sun protection.

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## Fitzpatrick Scale of skin types

To work out your skin type start at skin type 1 and work down to match your colouring and reaction to skin exposure.

| Skin type | Colouring (skin, eyes, hair)                                                                                                      | Reaction to sun exposure                                                                                                  |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>White skin; very fair; freckles</li> <li>Blue eyes</li> <li>Red or blonde hair</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Always burns</li> <li>Never tans</li> <li>Sensitive to sun exposure</li> </ul>     |
| <b>2</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>White skin; fair</li> <li>Blue, hazel or green eyes</li> <li>Red or blonde hair</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burns easily</li> <li>Tans minimally</li> <li>Sensitive to sun exposure</li> </ul> |
| <b>3</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All eye colours</li> <li>All hair colours</li> </ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burns moderately</li> <li>Tans gradually to light brown</li> </ul>                 |
| <b>4</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Olive/brown skin</li> </ul>                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burns minimally</li> <li>Easily tans</li> </ul>                                    |
| <b>5</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brown skin</li> </ul>                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rarely burns</li> <li>Tans profusely to dark</li> </ul>                            |
| <b>6</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very dark brown/ deeply pigmented skin</li> </ul>                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rarely burns</li> <li>Least sensitive</li> </ul>                                   |

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Most New Zealanders have heard messages about the danger of sun exposure and the need for protection. Yet some people still believe a tan looks healthy and attractive and they continue to tan in spite of knowing the dangers.

### What is a skin tan?

The natural brown colour in skin is called melanin. Some people are born with more melanin than others. UVA on the skin darkens the existing melanin, giving a tan. However, it also causes significant harm by penetrating into deep layers of the skin, causing ageing, wrinkling and increases the chance of developing skin damage and skin cancer.

Some people are born with naturally darker skin and tan more easily. They have more natural protection against sunburn and skin cancer than others.

### Solariums

#### Sun beds and sunlamps – the dangers

Using a sunlamp or a sun bed (solarium) increases the risk of developing skin cancer, especially melanoma. Solarium

may produce UVR several times stronger than the summer midday sun. By using a solarium people add to the UVR their skin already receives from the sun. Each dose of UVR increases the potential for skin damage.

All solarium users are at risk of adverse health effects. However, certain people are at increased risk of harm if they:

- have skin that doesn't tan easily (type 1, 2 and 3 of the Fitzpatrick Scale)
- suffer skin reactions from the sun
- have abnormal, discoloured patches on their skin
- have been treated for skin cancer or other sun-related skin growths
- are taking photosensitising medication or are under medical treatment
- within the last 48 hours have used a solarium or have been sunbathing.

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See the Cancer Society of New Zealand position statement on solaria for more information – [www.cancernz.org.nz/Cancer Prevention and Screening/Skin Cancer/ Position Statements](http://www.cancernz.org.nz/Cancer%20Prevention%20and%20Screening/Skin%20Cancer/Position%20Statements).

### Safety issues

New Zealand has no regulated training for people operating tanning clinics or solarium equipment. There is no way of knowing if the equipment is 'safe' or if the operator is using the equipment safely.

If a person decides to use a solarium despite knowing the risk of doing so, it is recommended they:

- discuss their exposure with the operator
- follow instructions on exposure times carefully
- protect their eyes with goggles (not sunglasses)
- know how to switch off the lamp or bed if anything goes wrong
- make sure someone is near to help in the case of emergency
- stop using the lamps if they notice burns, blistering, swelling or discoloured patches on their skin.

But remember, other damage might not show up for several years.

### Self-tan products

Evidence is growing that there is no safe tan produced by exposing your skin to harmful UVR. The only safe 'tan' known is from a bottle. Self-tan lotions are becoming very popular as people become more aware of the hazards of UVR exposure. They are a safer alternative than using a solarium – as well as being cheaper and more convenient.

The tanned colour produced does not give protection from the sun so the usual sun protection precautions apply. While some self-tan products also contain sunscreen, an SPF30+ sunscreen should still be applied 20 minutes before sun exposure, and reapplied frequently.



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## CHILDREN

Sun exposure and sunburn during the first 20 years could lead to the development of melanoma later in life. In summer, a child's skin can burn in just a few minutes.

### Keeping children safe from the sun

- When outdoors always use the SunSmart actions; slip, slop, slap and wrap.
- During the hours of 11am and 4pm in the daylight saving months, keep children out of the direct sun as much as possible – indoors and in the shade.
- Even in the shade other SunSmart actions should be used, as UVR is reflected by surfaces such as concrete, water and sand.
- Dress your child in a broad-brimmed hat and close-woven clothing that covers the arms, shoulders and legs.
- Use a sun cover over children's pushchairs.
- Plan in advance – if there is no available shade, create a shaded play area with an umbrella, thick cloth and sticks, tarpaulin and ropes.
- Use a SPF30+ broad spectrum sunscreen.

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**SLOP** – on some SPF30+ broad-spectrum sunscreen at least 15 minutes before going outdoors. Reapply regularly.

**SLAP** – on a hat with a wide brim or a cap with flaps.

**WRAP** – on a pair of sunglasses. Choose close fitting wraparound styles.

### Sunscreen tips

- Sunscreen should not be the only line of protection.
- Put sunscreen on any skin not covered by clothes.
- Choose a sunscreen without fragrance or one that is especially designed for children.
- A young child may be allergic to sunscreen, so test it first on a small area of skin.
- Zinc stick is useful for a child's nose, cheeks and lips – and fun to apply!

### SunSmart schools

A school sun protection policy is needed for the high-risk time, which is during the daylight saving months. Policies built on partnerships between educational boards or committees, parents, staff and students will be most effective, well accepted and easily sustained.

### School sun protection policy

- To increase student, teacher and community awareness of skin cancer and practical means of protection.



- To consider shade provision in all future development of the grounds.
- To include classes within the set curriculum about sun safety and personal responsibility.
- To encourage students and staff to wear protective clothing and hats for outdoor activities – during sport, lunchtimes, school camps and trips.
- To encourage students and staff to apply a broad spectrum SPF30+ sunscreen before going out into the sun.
- To encourage students to stay in the shade where possible.

For further information on sun safety in schools and early childhood centres refer to: [www.sunsmartschools.co.nz/](http://www.sunsmartschools.co.nz/)

### **SunSmart ideas for schools and early childhood centres**

To keep children safe from the harmful effects of the sun, consider:

- timetabling trips, sporting events, PE and other outdoor lessons for morning or late afternoon.
- planning excursions to venues that have adequate shade. Alternatively, providing shade by taking umbrellas or tents.
- making sure everyone (parents, staff and children) follow the SunSmart actions; slip, slop, slap and wrap.
- positive reinforcement e.g. giving “cover up” certificates to classes if

all students wear hats when they’re outside.

- students designing and decorating their own hats that are worn when outside.
- involving students in landscaping, with shade provisions as an important factor.
- making sun safety fun, not a discipline issue.
- installing a UV Index graph in a main area and updating it regularly.
- minimising children’s time outside during peak UVR times – shortening lunch break and lengthening other breaks.

For information on shade in schools refer to:

[www.cancernz.org.nz/Cancer Prevention and Screening/Skin Cancer/Information Sheets/](http://www.cancernz.org.nz/Cancer%20Prevention%20and%20Screening/Skin%20Cancer/Information%20Sheets/) and scroll down to “Tree planting for schools”.

Or see [www.sunsmart.org.nz/Shade/School Guidelines](http://www.sunsmart.org.nz/Shade/School%20Guidelines).



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## SunSmart Communities

Local authorities and other agencies can play a significant role in promoting sun safety in the community and to their workers by acknowledging skin damage from sun exposure is a serious public health issue and acting to prevent it.

Local authorities can enhance sun protection by:

- adopting sun protection policies, for example at playgrounds
- developing guidelines for sun protection at outdoor events
- providing sun protection for outdoor workers, such as appropriate clothing, sunscreen and shade
- providing sun protection and appropriately placed shade at pools, sports grounds, parks and gardens
- providing sun protection and appropriately placed shade at other outdoor facilities, such as camping grounds



- including sun protection measures in building codes and planning requirements
- erecting signage reminding the public to be SunSmart.

Members of the public can support the promotion of sun safety in public spaces by advocating for changes through their council's planning processes or by linking in with agencies such as their local Cancer Society.

For further information on SunSmart Councils visit [www.sunsmart.org.nz/sunsmart-councils-0](http://www.sunsmart.org.nz/sunsmart-councils-0)

### Planning outdoor events

Looking after the public can add value to your event. When planning or facilitating an outdoor event the follow actions can be considered so those involved are not exposed to dangerous UVR.

- Schedule events to avoid the middle of the day.
- Look at sites in advance to ensure the existing shade is used to its fullest.
- Where natural shade is not possible erect umbrellas, gazebos etc for spectators and officials/marshals.
- In all event publicity and literature, such as flyers, stickers and programmes, include the SunSmart actions; slip, slop, slap and wrap.

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- Ensure all volunteers, staff and participants have information to protect themselves from the sun and encourage them to adhere to the SunSmart actions.
- Consider merchandising and make hats, sunglasses and SPF 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen available for sale.

### Public announcements

While participating in and enjoying events, people can forget to continue to be SunSmart throughout the day. You can help by reminding them with short snappy announcements.

### General message

- Take care today to be SunSmart! A dose of sunburn is the last thing you need. It's easy – you've just got to remember to slip, slop, slap and wrap:
  - \* Slip into a shirt, and some shade.
  - \* Slop on loads of sunscreen.
  - \* Slap on a hat
  - \* Wrap on some sunnies.



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### Shade message

- Have a great time today – and remember to protect yourself from the harsh sun. If you think you've been in the sun a bit long, make the most of the shade we've provided. Be SunSmart – slip into some shade.

### Sunscreen

- A quick reminder – you'll have slapped some sunscreen on thickly before coming here today, keep an eye on the time and sun. It might just be time for you to reapply it. Be SunSmart – slop on loads of SPF30+ sunscreen.

### Hat

It's good to see you all here today – and it's great to see people wearing their hats. A good hat is a great way to help protect you from the sun. Be SunSmart – slap on a hat.

### Sunnies

- There's plenty to see here today – and one way of making sure you don't miss anything is to have a decent pair of sunglasses on. A good pair of sunnies will help protect your eyes, and help you catch all the action. Be SunSmart – wrap on some sunnies.



### Ultraviolet Index

- Did you know that you can get the expected Ultraviolet Index from the SunSmart website, your newspaper weather page or the TV and radio weather reports? It's a great way to know just how easily you might get sunburnt. Be SunSmart - protect yourself when the UVI is three or above.

### Unique conditions

- We hope you have a great time here today – that's why we want you to keep an eye on the sun.
- The last thing we need is for your day to be ruined by sunburn. New Zealand's unique conditions mean we have to be careful about protecting ourselves. We're exposed to a lot of harmful ultraviolet rays, so we're vulnerable to skin damage. Be SunSmart – slip, slop, slap and wrap.

### Cloud

- The weather in this country can be pretty changeable. Sunshine one minute, cloud the next. Don't be fooled by the cloud – even when there's cloud around you can still get sunburnt. That's because ultraviolet rays are still around even on cloudy days, and they're what do the damage. This summer be SunSmart – slip, slop, slap and wrap, even when it's a bit cloudy.

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These announcements can be downloaded for free from the SunSmart website: [www.sunsmart.org.nz/being-sunsmart/how/event-public-announcements.aspx](http://www.sunsmart.org.nz/being-sunsmart/how/event-public-announcements.aspx)

### Outdoor workers

Employees who work outdoors for all or part of the day are at increased risk of developing basal cell carcinoma (BCC) and squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) because of their exposure to UVR over a period of time. The Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992 requires employers to identify and control the risks from UVR faced by workers required to work outside.



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Ideas for employers to fulfil this expectation are:

- set up systems of work to reduce the amount of time employees spend in the sun
- provide and maintain equipment needed to protect outdoor workers from the sun i.e. long trousers, long-sleeved shirts, sunscreen and sunglasses, shaded areas
- minimise workers' sun exposure i.e. change the time of day when a specific outdoor task is undertaken
- provide shade for workers undertaking outdoor tasks whenever possible
- provide information to employees about the effects of sun exposure and ways of minimising the risks through adopting the SunSmart actions; slip, slop, slap and wrap.

For further information on sun protection for outdoor workers, visit the Cancer Society website:

[www.cancernz.org.nz/Cancer Prevention and Screening/Skin Cancer/Information Sheets/](http://www.cancernz.org.nz/Cancer%20Prevention%20and%20Screening/Skin%20Cancer/Information%20Sheets/) and scroll down to the "Employers and Outdoor Workers" section.

A resource for employers and employees, *Sun Protection and Outdoor Work*, has been developed by the Cancer Society of New Zealand and is available from your

local Cancer Society or see [www.cancernz.org.nz](http://www.cancernz.org.nz).

### Indoor workers

While outdoor workers are at greater risk of skin cancer, indoor workers also face the risk of sunburn while out on work business or during breaks. Employers are encouraged to provide sunscreen and sun protection reminders in work vehicles, restrooms and at staff functions.



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**What is it?** Vitamin D is found naturally in some foods (i.e. oily fish and milk products). However the major source of vitamin D for humans is the synthesis in the skin from the action of ultraviolet B radiation from the sun. However, this is also the radiation most commonly associated with skin burning and melanoma.

### Benefits – Why do we need it?

Vitamin D is essential for good bone health. Without it the body is capable of absorbing only 10 to 15 percent of all calcium consumed in the diet. Vitamin D is essential for the prevention of osteoporosis and rickets.

**How do we get it?** New Zealanders get most of their vitamin D through synthesis in the skin. Most people can get enough vitamin D through a few minutes exposure to sunlight each day. This can be gained through normal daily activity and when taking SunSmart measures during the peak hours of 11am to 4pm in summer.

### What prevents efficient synthesis of vitamin D?

- Older people are most at risk of vitamin D deficiency, because their skin is less efficient at synthesising it.
- Housebound and institutionalised people who are not exposed to much sunlight are also at risk.
- People who continually wear clothing that allows only minimal exposure to sunlight have an added risk.
- Sunscreens reduce the synthesis of vitamin D in the skin.

### Children and vitamin D

A small amount of gentle sunlight is good for children. Aim for early morning and late afternoon sun during the summer months and at most times during winter.

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## Sun safety sector

The promotion of sun safety in New Zealand is led by the Health Sponsorship Council (HSC), the Cancer Society of New Zealand, and public health units.

SunSmart™ is the national brand for sun safety.

The Skin Cancer Control Steering Committee is a group of key stakeholders who meet every three years with a view to reflecting on the previous three years and developing and identifying strategic direction for the next three years. They last met in April 2007 and the following framework is the result of that meeting.

### The New Zealand Skin Cancer Control Steering Committee Framework

This framework is consistent with the National Cancer Control Strategy and is intended to encourage coordination in New Zealand work on skin cancer control, thereby contributing to best outcomes. As such it is intended to be a guide for action rather than a blue print.

The framework can be viewed and downloaded via:

<http://www.sunsmart.org.nz/skin-cancer-control-in-nz/who%27s-involved.aspx>

## Contact information and websites

### Contacts

#### SunSmart

HSC Sun Safety Programme Manager

Phone: +64 4 472 5777

Email: [info@sunsmart.org.nz](mailto:info@sunsmart.org.nz)

#### Cancer Society of New Zealand

Health Promotion Manager

Phone: +64 4 494 7270

Email: [admin@cancer.org.nz](mailto:admin@cancer.org.nz)

#### Regional Divisions

Cancer Society of New Zealand

See [www.cancernz.org.nz](http://www.cancernz.org.nz) for a list of divisions, or contact the divisions by phone. Their numbers are in local phone directories.

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### Websites

**SunSmart** ([www.sunsmart.org.nz](http://www.sunsmart.org.nz))

**Cancer Society of NZ** ([www.cancernz.org.nz](http://www.cancernz.org.nz))

**Melanoma Foundation** ([www.melanoma.co.nz](http://www.melanoma.co.nz))

**SunSmart Councils** ([www.sunsmart.org.nz/sunsmart-councils-o](http://www.sunsmart.org.nz/sunsmart-councils-o))

**SunSmart Schools** ([www.sunsmartschools.co.nz](http://www.sunsmartschools.co.nz))

**National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA)** ([www.niwa.cri.nz](http://www.niwa.cri.nz))

**MetService** ([www.metservice.co.nz](http://www.metservice.co.nz))

**NZ Dermatological Society** ([www.dermnetnz.org](http://www.dermnetnz.org))

**NZ Health Information Service** ([www.nzhis.govt.nz](http://www.nzhis.govt.nz))

**Occupational Safety and Health** ([www.osh.govt.nz](http://www.osh.govt.nz))

**The Cancer Society Social & Behavioural Research in Cancer Unit, Otago University**  
([www.otago.ac.nz/sbrcg](http://www.otago.ac.nz/sbrcg))

### Access to the SunSmart Fact Pack resource

To obtain a printed copy of this SunSmart Fact Pack resource contact the HSC Sun Safety Programme on 04 472 5777 or download it as a PDF from the SunSmart website:  
[www.sunsmart.org.nz](http://www.sunsmart.org.nz)

March 2010



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