

**Sunscreen**

**Protection against Damaging Sunlight**

* UV (ultraviolet) rays are part of sunlight that causes the most damage to skin, with the most common immediate effect being sunburn.
* Babies under 6 months of age should avoid exposure to direct sunlight. They should always be kept in the shade, with as much skin covered as possible when they are out in the sunlight.
* Babies under 6 months old are more prone to problems from both heat and sunlight, so hats and clothing made of light, breathable material is recommended, such as tightly-woven cotton. Wet clothing is not as effective in protection as dry clothing.
* Window glass blocks the majority of harmful UV rays, however the heat that is still felt through window light should be monitored for infants.
* Even on overcast days, clouds let through many dangerous UV rays. If you are out between 10am-4pm especially, skin protection should be used. UV rays are reflected off snow, sand, cement, and water, so take extra care when those are nearby.

**Sunscreens**

* You should look for a sunscreen that is labeled as broad-spectrum, meaning it protects against both UVA and UVB rays. This gives the most coverage to prevent damage.
* Reapply sunscreen after going in the water and as directed on the bottle. Apply sunscreen 15-30 minutes prior to sun exposure.
* Sunscreen is safe to be used on children 6 months or over. Avoid applying to hands since it will likely be rubbed in child’s eyes.
* Sunscreens with an SPF of 15 or more theoretically filter >92% of the UV Rays. Sunscreens with an SPF of 30 filter out about 97% of UVR. In actual use, the SPF is often much lower than expected because the amount used is less than half the recommended amount. An SPF of 15 should be adequate in most cases. A sunscreen-containing lip protection product can be helpful.
* We do not recommend using combination sunscreen/insect repellants because sunscreen needs to be reapplied frequently, insect repellant does not.