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Summer Skin Care by Dr. Tardy

Sunscreen

Did you know that 2 or more blistering sunburns before age 18 will double your risk for melanoma? In fact, most (60-80%) skin cancers are due to UV exposure. So how do you protect your children (and yourself?)

Use SPF 15 or greater (SPF 15 stops 83% UVB, SPF 30 stops 97%. Do the math; >SPF 30 is often money down the drain)

Broad Spectrum Coverage: UVB AND UVA coverage must be present

My favorite sunscreens have Titanium Dioxide and/or Zinc oxide in them because they truly block light rather than absorb it. **Neutrogena Pure and Free Baby, Neutrogena Sensitive, and Aveeno Mineral Block** have both. Be aware though, these are harder to rub in, and more expensive. Blue Lizard and Vanicream are awesome, especially for sensitive skin, but usually have to be ordered online. The most important thing about sunscreen is to USE IT!

Apply 20 min before going outdoors. Rub in the spray on sunscreens. If in water, **reapply every 2 hours**.

Babies under 6 months should generally avoid direct sunlight. Use hats and shades.

Insects

San Antonio has some nasty bugs. Many families find success repelling mosquitos with all natural oils such as lemongrass, eucalyptus, and citronella. If this works for you, great. **However, most studies identify that Picaridin and DEET are the most effective.** DEET has gotten some bad press in past years, but is by far the most effective and longest lasting. We use Deep Woods OFF in my family, which has 25% DEET. It is safe to use down to 2 months **AS LONG AS you rinse your body and do not sleep in it.**

-DEET 4.8% provides 1.5h protection. 24% provides 5 hours protection.

-Picaridin 10% protects 2.5h. 20% protects 5 hours.

-Max AAP recommended concentration of DEET is 30% and Picaridin is 20% for children.

-DEET and Picaridin are safe for 2 months and older. Oil of lemon eucalyptus are only for children over 3 years old.

Try a variety and see what works best for your kids. Every human odor is different and responds differently.