

Safety under the Sun Protect Yourself against UV Radiation



Centre for Health Protection Website
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Health Education Infoline of
the Department of Health



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Protect Yourself against
UV Radiation

UV Index

- The Hong Kong Observatory adopts the UV Index and its corresponding exposure levels defined by the World Health Organization.
- The UV Index is a measure of the potential harm of UV radiation on the human skin.
- The higher the UV index, the greater the potential for damage to the skin. In Hong Kong, UV index can often exceed 10 on a sunny day in the summer.

UV Index	Exposure Level
0-2	Low
3-5	Moderate
6-7	High
8-10	Very High
≥11	Extreme

Ultraviolet Radiation and Health

- The sun emits radiation of different wavelengths, including ultraviolet (UV) light, which is invisible and cannot be felt.
- A moderate exposure to the sun helps our body to produce vitamin D, which is important for maintaining healthy bones.
- Excessive exposure to UV radiation may cause painful sunburn, wrinkling and premature ageing of the skin as well as increased risk of skin cancers and cataracts.

Protective Measures against UV Radiation

- Minimise direct exposure of the skin and eyes to sunlight.
- Avoid staying outdoors for prolonged periods on days when the UV Index is high (6 or above).
- If staying in the sun is inevitable, take the following precautions:



Check the latest
UV Index and its
forecast



Wear appropriate clothing (e.g. long-sleeved
and loose-fitting clothes, a wide-brimmed hat
and UV-blocking sunglasses)



Seek shade



Use an umbrella



Apply a broad-spectrum
sunscreen lotion of at
least SPF 15 - ideally
higher - and reapply every
two hours if you stay
out in the sun, or after
swimming, sweating or
towel drying off

Sun Safety Tips for Children

Children are at a higher risk of suffering UV damage than adults, and therefore require special protection. To enjoy fun in the sun with children, parents / carers should bear in mind the following tips:

Encourage children
to play in the shade.

Make sure children wear appropriate
clothing (e.g. a hat and sunglasses)
when they go outdoors.

Help children apply sunscreen
lotion generously and pay particular
attention to the exposed body parts
(e.g. face, neck, shoulders, back,
knees and tops of feet).

