

8 Bad Excuses to Not Wear Sunscreen

If you think you have a good excuse to skip the sunscreen today, think again. We've uncovered 8 reasons why Canadians aren't wearing sunscreen

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Canadians seem to have a love-hate relationship with sunscreen. We love the protection it offers our [skin](#), but hate how it feels, smells and costs. But what's more worrisome is that we're turning these dislikes into actual excuses for avoiding sunscreen. With many people skipping sun protection, it's not surprising that melanoma diagnoses are rising in Canada. According to the [Canadian Cancer Society](#), melanoma rates in the past two decades have increased, despite the fact that it's one of the most easily preventable forms of cancer. In 2014 it was estimated that 6,500 Canadians would be diagnosed with the disease while 1,050 would die

from it.

Let's bust some excuses with expert information on why your reasons for avoiding sunblock are unfounded and dangerous to your health.

1. My body won't be able to process vitamin D

There's a commonly held belief that sunscreen use will lead to vitamin D deficiency because the lotion prevents your skin from absorbing the sun's rays. Dr. Anatoli Freiman, dermatologist and medical director of the Toronto Dermatology Centre, says this idea is a myth. '**Wearing sunscreen doesn't completely block the sun's rays, or prevent complete blockage of vitamin D synthesization and production,**' he says.

If you're still concerned that you're not getting sufficient amounts of the 'sunshine vitamin', you can **add foods rich in vitamin D to your diet.** Health Canada recommends vitamin D heavy hitters such as fatty fish (salmon), egg yolks and fortified milk. You can also ask your physician or pharmacist about taking vitamin D supplements.

2. My cosmetics already have SPF

Some makeup contains SPF, but most people don't wear enough foundation, eye shadow, or lipstick to offer complete skin protection ' plus most cosmetics don't contain sufficient SPF. 'The majority of makeup products have SPF15. That's not enough for adequate protection,' says Dr. Freiman. 'And when people put makeup on, they put it on the face so it doesn't address the rest of the body.'

Dermatologists recommend that you use a **broad-spectrum sunscreen** with at least an SPF of 30 in addition to your cosmetics. Broad-spectrum means that the product will protect your skin from both UVA and UVB rays from the sun. UVA rays can prematurely age your skin, while UVB rays are responsible for sunburn. Too much exposure to both UVA and UVB rays can lead to the development of skin cancer. To ensure that you're applying enough sunscreen to cover your face and body, Dr. Freiman suggests using a golfball or shot glass-sized amount, and plan to reapply it every two hours.

3. Sunscreen formulas are sticky

A visit to the drugstore will uncover many products that aren't gooey or sticky. **Ingredients including zinc formulations have a lighter, less tacky feel.** 'There are a lot of sprays, lotions and emulsions that people can use. Some zinc products have micro-ionized particles so they can be less sticky,' says Dr. Freiman.

4. The **chemicals in sunscreen** are dangerous to my health

This excuse is based on a popular misconception. Dr. Freiman says that **no scientific studies exist that prove a link between sunscreen ingredients and health concerns**, however, there are studies that show that unprotected skin can develop cancer. 'We do know that not wearing sunscreen and being in the sun causes cancer. That's a proven fact,' he says. Sunscreen is just one aspect of several safe sun strategies – 'Stay out of the sun during peak hours (between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.), wear sun protective clothing including hats, and sunglasses with proper coverage,' says Dr. Freiman.

Look for sun protective clothing that features an ultraviolet protection factor (UPF) label. 'Sun protective clothing typically has UPF 30 or higher; UPF 30 means that only 1 in 30 (three percent) of UV rays will pass through [the clothing to the skin],' says Dr. Freiman. Compare that figure to a regular cotton t-shirt. The Skin Cancer Foundation says a typical cotton t-shirt will only have a UPF of about five. If that shirt gets wet, that number drops to three. Sunglasses should have a label that states they block 99 to 100 percent of all UV radiation.

5. They're pricey

Price shouldn't keep users away. '**Less expensive brands can offer good protection,**' says Dr. Freiman. 'In Canada most dermatologists recommend sunscreen that has the **CDA** (Canadian Dermatologist Association) logo of approval. It shows that the sunscreen has been reviewed. Many of them aren't expensive and are reasonably priced.' Don't worry about sunscreen making a dent in your wallet. You don't have to buy the most expensive brand to protect your skin.

6. I don't like the way sunscreen smells

Say goodbye to coconut scents. 'A lot of formulations smell nice and elegant while others don't have a smell so it shouldn't be a big issue,' says Dr. Freiman. Fragrance-free sunscreen products are wearable anywhere including the office.

7. It gets into my eyes while working out

You can exercise outdoors while being protected from the sun's harmful rays. Dr. Freiman suggests that sports enthusiasts ensure that their sunscreen product is applied properly. 'I do a fair amount of sports and haven't had problems as long as the sunscreen is rubbed in away from the eyes,' he says. 'Don't put it close to the eye itself.' You can also opt for sunblock sticks. These formulations stay put during active sports, so you won't get SPF dripping into your eyes. For extra eye area protection, wear sunglasses that block 99 to 100 percent of UV rays.

8. Sunscreen leads to acne breakouts

If your skin is prone to pimples, opt for a product that won't clog pores. **'A lot of the sunscreens with the CDA logo of approval are non-comedogenic, so they don't cause breakouts,'** says Dr. Freiman. With lotions, creams, sticks and products containing zinc and titanium dioxide on the market, you have a wide range of sunscreens to choose from.

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