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WHICH SUNSCREENS TO CHOOSE AND WHICH TO AVOID

Which sunscreens to choose

According to the American Academy of Dermatology, an optimal sunscreen must have an **SPF rating of at least 30**. It also must have the words "**broad spectrum**" (UVA + UVB protection) on the label. If used while swimming, it is preferred that the sunscreen is labeled as "**water-resistant for 80 minutes.**" Since one in five Americans is destined to develop a skin cancer within his or her lifetime, the need to determine the optimal, non-toxic, and the most cosmetically-elegant sunscreen has never been more pressing.

Which sunscreens to potentially avoid

A recent study indicated that spray sunscreen is the most common type of sunscreen delivery used in children. Although no proof exists, the Environmental Working Group (EWG) recently warned against spray or powder-based sunscreens since these formulations can fill the air and be inhaled potentially causing lung inflammation and contributing to carcinogenesis. EWG also warns about certain sunscreen ingredients such as oxybenzone which is linked to hormone disruption and allergic reactions. Instead, EWG recommends choosing sunscreens containing zinc oxide, titanium dioxide, avobenzone, or Mexoryl.

How to correctly apply sunscreen

For adequate protection, sunscreens are best **applied 15 minutes before going outside, and re-applied every two hours when outdoors**. The recommended amount of sunscreen is **one ounce for the entire body**, or enough to fill a shot glass, however research demonstrates that most people only apply 25 to 50 percent of the recommended amount and do not re-apply often enough. Since most sunscreen containers have 4 to 6 ounces of product, if applied and re-applied correctly, an adult spending a day on the beach could easily go through a 4 ounce container of sunscreen in just one day!

Which sunscreens can claim to be most "cosmetically-elegant" and have most anti-aging benefits

Sunscreen formulations have moved beyond simple sun protection into the realm of skin repair. The most comprehensive sunscreen formulas such as Revision Skincare **Intellishade SPF 45** contain antioxidants guarding against free radicals; botanical anti-inflammatory ingredients like green tea extract, or aloe leaf juice; and collagen-stimulating peptides. These innovative products incorporate mineral, physical sunscreen ingredients like micronized zinc oxide and titanium dioxide. In clinical studies, these mineral sunscreen ingredients show a dose-dependent degree of protection against DNA damage which is the initiating factor of skin cancer formation. Despite delivering SPF of 30 or above, these formulas are "cosmetically-elegant" and do not have the sticky, greasy feel, or white residue. Other examples of high quality, paraben-free anti-aging sunscreens include **Obagi Nu-derm Sun Shield SPF 50, Innovative Skincare Extreme Protect SPF 30, Avene Tinted Compact SPF 50, SkinMedica Daily Physical Defense SPF 30+ and Environmental Defense Sunscreen SPF 50+**. We are pleased to offer these sunscreens along with other carefully selected products at our Chevy Chase office. Please call us at (301) 656-SKIN to discuss which product would be most beneficial for your individual skincare needs.