



Sunburn

You should never get sunburned! It leads to premature aging, wrinkling of the skin, and skin cancer.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Red, swollen, painful, and sometimes blistered skin
- Headache
- Mild fever
- Chills, fever, nausea, and vomiting if the sunburn is extensive and severe



CAUSES, RISK FACTORS & CARE

Sunburn results from too much exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light from the sun, sunlamps, and workplace light sources, such as welding arcs. Severe sunburn can occur even when the skies are overcast.

The risk for sunburn is increased for persons with fair skin, blue eyes, and red or blond hair, and for a sunburn-like reaction that can be associated with taking some medications. These include sulfa drugs, tetracyclines, some diuretics, and Benadryl, an over-the-counter antihistamine.

Self-care treats most cases of sunburn. Medical treatment is needed for a severe case of sunburn. Immediate care is needed if dehydration and/or a heat stroke is also present with the sunburn.



SELF-CARE

- Cool the affected area with clean towels or gauze dipped in cool water. Take a cool bath or shower.
- Take an over-the-counter medicine for pain and/or fever.
- When you go in the sun again, wear sunscreen and cover sunburned skin so you don't get burned more.
- Rest in a cool room. Find a position that doesn't hurt the sunburn.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Don't use local anesthetic creams or sprays that numb pain, such as Benzocaine or Lidocaine. If you must use them, use only a little, because they cause allergic reactions in some people.

PREVENTION

- Avoid exposure to the midday sun (10 a.m. to 4 p.m. standard time).
- Use a broad spectrum sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher when exposed to the sun. The lighter your skin, the higher the SPF number should be. Make sure the sunscreen blocks both UVA and UVB rays and is free of para-aminobenzoic acid (PABA). Some people have skin allergic reactions to PABA. Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours and after swimming or sweating.
- Use moisturizers, make-up, lip balm, etc. with sunscreen.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat and long sleeves.
- Wear clothing with sunscreen protection or muted colors.
- Wear sunglasses that block both UVA and UVB rays.

