

Health Awareness

A County Health Pool Publication



July, 2011

Sun Safety: Save Your Skin

Winter in Colorado has come and gone. Summer's arrival means it's time for picnics, trips to the pool and beach -- and a spike in sunburns. Sun safety is never out of season. Everyone needs to be wary of the sun's rays.

The need for sun safety has become clear over the past 30 years, with studies showing that excessive exposure to the sun can cause skin cancer and premature aging of the skin. Harmful rays from the sun -- and from sunlamps and tanning beds -- may also cause eye problems, weaken your immune system, and give you unsightly skin spots and wrinkles, or "leathery" skin.

Sun damage to the body is caused by invisible ultraviolet (UV) radiation, which reaches us as long wavelengths known as UVA and short wavelengths known as UVB. UVB radiation can cause sunburn. But the longer wavelength UVA is dangerous too, as it can penetrate the skin and damage tissue at deeper levels.

If you have an illness and take medications, ask your doctor about extra sun care precautions, because some drugs may increase sensitivity to the sun.



Reduce Time in the Sun

This is especially recommended from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., when the sun's rays are strongest. Even on an overcast day, up to 80% of the sun's UV rays can get through the clouds. Stay in the shade as much as possible throughout the day.

Dress With Care

Wear clothes that protect your body. Cover as much of your body as possible if you plan to be outside on a sunny day. Wear a wide-brimmed hat, long sleeves, and long pants. Sun-protective clothing is now available in stores. However, the FDA does not regulate such products unless the manufacturer intends to make a medical claim. Consider using an umbrella for shade.

Dress With Care

Sunlight reflecting off snow, sand,

or water further increases exposure to UV radiation, increasing your risk of developing eye problems such as cataracts. The right sunglasses can protect your eyes.

Long hours on the beach or in the snow without adequate eye protection also can result in a short-term condition known as photokeratitis,

(Over)



Understanding Alcohol Abuse . . . (Continued)

or reversible sunburn of the cornea. This painful condition -- also known as “snow blindness” -- can cause temporary loss of vision.

- When buying sunglasses, look for a label that specifically offers 99%-100% UV protection. This assures that the glasses block both forms of UV radiation.
- Eyewear should be labeled “sunglasses.” Be wary of dark or tinted eyewear sold as fashion accessories that may provide little or no protection from UV or visible light.
- Don’t assume that you get more UV protection with pricier sun glasses or glasses with a darker tint.
- Be sure that your sunglasses don’t distort colors and affect the recognition of traffic signals.
- Ask an eye care professional to test your sunglasses if you’re not sure of their level of UV protection.

Check for Skin Cancer

Check your skin regularly for signs of skin cancer. Look for changes in the size, shape, color or feel of birthmarks, moles and spots. If you find any changes or find sores that are not healing, see your doctor.

No matter what our skin color, we’re all potential victims of sunburn and the other detrimental effects of excessive exposure to UV radiation.

Source: www.webmd.com

Benefits Corner

FAQ

As part of our monthly newsletter, CHP will feature a FAQ (Frequently Asked Question) to assist the members in utilizing the plan. This month, CHP is featuring three FAQ’s.

CHP Frequently Asked Questions

1) How can I verify that my provider is in the network?

Call Anthem customer service at 1-866-698-0087 or log on to www.anthem.com; Find a Dr, Colorado, Select plan type “PPO” for Medical and “Dental PPO Plus” for Dental.

2) What if I want to see a provider in another state?

Contact Anthem customer service at 1-866-698-0087 to verify the provider is in-network or log on to www.anthem.com, Go to Find a Doctor.

3) If my claim is denied by Anthem is there another step I can take?

Yes, call Anthem customer service and ask to file an appeal. If it is still denied, notify CHP in writing requesting your denied appeal be reviewed and it will be presented to the CHP Board of Directors. Information on grievances and appeals can be found on page 62 of your Plan Document. If you have any further questions, contact your CHP Benefit Administrator.

If you have a frequently asked question that you feel should be highlighted in our newsletter, please email Meredith Burcham at mburcham@ctsi.org. Thank you!

