

A photograph of a man with a beard and short dark hair, wearing a dark shirt, applying white sunscreen to the cheek of a young girl with curly brown hair. The girl is wearing a green and white polka-dot swimsuit. They are outdoors in front of a rocky cliff face. A large, white, stylized heart outline is superimposed on the right side of the image, partially behind the girl's head.

Let your health shine

Understanding skin cancer and sun safety

There's nothing better than enjoying time outdoors. But fun in the sun can come with some health risks — and that means more than a bad burn. Take a few moments to learn how you can spot issues like skin cancer and how you can protect your skin from the sun.

Get to know your skin

Skin cancer can be cured if found and treated early. Be sure to check your body once a month, looking for any new skin growth or changes in skin growth. Know the ABCDEs of early detection.

Also, be sure to have your doctor check your skin during routine health exams and ask a friend or family member to examine areas of skin that you can't see. Skin cancer often appears on the torso of men and the legs for women.

Asymmetry — One half of a mole doesn't match the other half.

Border irregularity — The edges of a mole are ragged, notched or blurred.

Color — The skin color is not uniform. Shades of tan, brown and black are present along with dashes of red, white and blue.

Diameter — The size of the mole is greater than $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch, or about the size of a pencil eraser.

Evolution — There is a change in the size, shape or symptoms of the growth.

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Protect yourself from the sun

Be smart when you spend time in the sun. Cover up and drink plenty of water. Staying hydrated can help prevent nausea, headaches and feeling tired.

Here are some simple ways you can help keep your skin protected:



Find shade

When you can, avoid direct sunlight. Find shade under an umbrella, a tree or other covered area.



Wear a hat

Wear a hat with a brim all the way around. It should shade your face, ears and the back of your neck.



Apply sunscreen

Before you go outside, put on a sunscreen with at least SPF 30. Do this on even slightly cloudy or cool days.



Bring sunglasses

Wear sunglasses that block UVA and UVB (ultraviolet) rays. They protect the eyes and help reduce the risk of cataracts. Wrap-around sunglasses work best.



Choose the right clothing

Wear long-sleeved shirts and pants. Sun protection fabric labeled UPF 40 (UPF stands for ultraviolet protection factor) is like wearing SPF 30 lotion.

Remember to stay safe in the sun while you're having fun outdoors. To learn more, register or log in at **Aetna.com**.

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