



Save Your Skin From The Seven Deadly Sun Sins

New Zealanders should sin less against their skin this summer if they want to look good and live longer says one of the country's leading sensitive skincare experts.

'The biggest problems facing skin health in New Zealand are the enduring misconceptions Kiwis have about sun protection' says Oasis Beauty founder and skincare saviour Stephanie Evans, 'There are seven serious sun protection sins that we want everyone to be aware of so that they can take steps to have a safer, sexier, fun summer in the sun. Every year over 2,000 patients are registered with life threatening melanoma and 67,000 cases of non-melanoma skin cancer are diagnosed in New Zealand alone. By re-evaluating how we think about our skin and the time we spend outside, we want to kick start a healthier Kiwi lifestyle in the sun for 2016.'

I. Not Checking Our Sunscreens for Zinc Oxide

Using sunscreen without zinc oxide as an active ingredient is certainly a serious sun safety sin. Zinc oxide is recommended by the American Association of Dermatology as a clean, broad-spectrum effective and hypo-allergenic blocker of UV radiation. Studies have also indicated that it may be one of the few active-ingredients in sunscreen that doesn't cause premature aging from the release of free-radicals in the skin.

II. Pursuing the All Over Tan

Getting a tanned skin is just as dangerous as getting sunburnt. Well established studies on the effects of the rays that don't cause sunburn (UVA) indicate that those who consistently tan may be just as much at risk of skin cancer and premature aging as those who experience sunburn.

III. Believing UVB Causes All The Damage

UVA radiation makes up to 95% of the rays that reach our skin from the sun. While UVA rays are less harmful than UVB, UVA may cause more damage than we think. Doctor John H Epstein of the Skin Cancer Foundation reveals 'Studies over the past two decades, show that UVA damages skin cells called keratinocytes in the basal layer of the epidermis, where most skin cancers occur. UVA contributes to and may even initiate the development of skin cancers.'

IV. Thinking the Higher the SPF Number the Better

Dermatologists agree that SPF 30 is a minimum requirement of sun protection, but advice from the Skin Cancer Foundation makes clear: 'SPF is not an amount of protection per se. Rather; it indicates how long it will take for UVB rays to redden skin when using a sunscreen, compared to how long skin would take to redden without the product. For instance, someone using a sunscreen with an SPF of 30 will take 30 times longer to redden than without the sunscreen; SPF 30 protects against 97 percent; and SPF 50, 98 percent.'

V. Not Priming the Skin and Then Reapplying

Dermatologist's best advice is to apply a thick base layer of sunscreen 15-30 minutes before going out and a second layer 15-30 minutes after initial exposure and then every two hours after that or as needed. One study by the American Academy of Dermatology reveals: 'Typically reapplication of sunscreen at 20 minutes [after initial exposure] results in 60% to 85% of the ultraviolet exposure that would be received if sunscreen were reapplied at 2 hours.'

VI. No sun, no screen

Not using sunscreen on cloudy days may increasing the risk, reveals one study. We tend to stay outside longer without sunscreen when it is overcast and researchers now believe the clouds may magnify UV radiation putting us at more risk than we think. According to a report by NASA's Socioeconomic Data and Applications Centre '...short-term or localised UV levels can be larger than for cloud-free skies if direct sunlight is also present. Clouds tend to randomise the directions of the incoming radiation.'

VII. Forgetting sunscreen on the slopes

The Skin Cancer Foundation explains: 'Since UV radiation exposure increases 4 to 5 percent with every 1,000 feet above sea level. At an altitude of 9,000 to 10,000 feet, UV radiation may be 35 to 45 percent more intense than at sea level. In addition, snow reflects up to 80 percent of the UV light from the sun, meaning that you are often hit by the same rays twice.'

Sources:

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