

Sunscreen: A key for safe fun in the sun

OTTAWA, May 29, 2018 – The Canadian Dermatology Association (CDA) is applauding Canadians for their sun safety savvy, as new research shows that year-round use of sunscreen continues to rise.

Public opinion research into Canadians' opinions and attitudes toward sun exposure and sun protection done for the CDA in 2017 (dermatology.ca/statistics) shows that seven in 10 (71%) apply sunscreen when going outdoors, and over a quarter (26%) of Canadians now use sunscreen all year. That is an increase of 9 percentage points over 2015.

“Canada’s dermatologists strongly support the use of sunscreen as an effective and safe means to provide protection from the sun’s harmful rays,” said Dr. Jennifer Beecker, certified dermatologist and National Chair of the CDA Sun Awareness Working Group. “Seeking shade, wearing protective clothing, sunglasses and using a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a minimum SPF 30 all help provide safe sun protection.”

The CDA has provided Canadians with information and recommendations on sunscreen products since 1989 through its Sun Protection Program (SPP). The program, started with the encouragement of then Health and Welfare Canada, recognizes sunscreen products that meet a standard that provides effective sun protection.

Governed by an Expert Advisory Board comprised of CDA members, [recognized products](#) meet the following criteria:

- Broad-spectrum with a SPF 30 or higher
- Non-irritating ingredients and low potential for allergy
- Fragrance-free or minimally fragranced
- Non-comedogenic

As Sun Awareness Week (May 28 to June 3) continues, the CDA is reinforcing the message that sunscreen is [safe to use and critical](#) to avoiding over-exposure to the sun’s harmful rays. This message is particularly important given recent high-profile media reports about specific brands of sunscreens.

“Children under the age of two do have more sensitive skin, but generally do not have problems with the use of sunscreens,” said Toronto certified dermatologist and SPP Expert Advisory Board Chair Dr. Anatoli Freiman. “However, for young children or those with sensitive skin, it is always best try a small amount of the product on their arm, and check for any reaction up to 48 hours later.”

The CDA also suggests that people with highly sensitive skin might look for products labelled “mineral” or “physical”. These usually contain ingredients such as titanium dioxide and zinc oxide, and may be more tolerable for those with highly reactive skin.

The CDA has many helpful [resources available online](#) to help answer questions about the safe and effective use of sunscreen.

Questions for the CDA Sun Awareness Survey were fielded on Ipsos Canadian online omnibus between Sept. 5 and 8, 2017 to a representative sample of 1051 Canadians age 16 year and over. A sample of this size yields a credibility interval of +/- 3.4%, 19 times out of 20.

Sun Awareness Week

The Canadian Dermatology Association has organized the nation-wide early summer Sun Awareness Week since 1989. The aim is to educate Canadians about the dangers of too much sun and to help stop the rising incidence of skin cancer in Canada. This year’s Sun Awareness Week is Monday, May 28 to Sunday, June 3, 2018.

About the CDA

The Canadian Dermatology Association, founded in 1925, represents Canadian certified dermatologists. The association provides easy access to a reliable source of medical knowledge on dermatology. CDA exists to advance the science and art of medicine and surgery related to the care of the skin, hair and nails; provide continuing professional development for its members; support and advance patient care; provide public education on sun protection and other aspects of skin health; and promote a lifetime of healthier skin, hair and nails. By doing so, CDA informs and empowers both medical professionals and the Canadian public. To learn more about what the work CDA does visit dermatology.ca or join the conversation on twitter.com/CdnDermatology, facebook.com/CdnDermatology, or instagram.com/canadiandermatologyassociation/.

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