

Sun Safety

Facts and Figures

- UV (ultraviolet) radiation from the sun is a major cause of skin cancer. Cases have doubled in the last 20 years.
- 40,000 people are diagnosed with skin cancer and 3,000 people die from it each year.
- Sunlight causes the skin to produce a dark pigment called melanin; this is a sign that the skin has been damaged.
- Long-term sun exposure speeds up the skin's ageing process, making it become more dry and wrinkled.
- People working outside should consider exposure to UV radiation as an occupational health hazard.
- A suntan is perceived as "healthy" but it may not be so.

Who has increased risk of skin damage?

- People with pale skin, fair hair, freckles or a large number of moles.
- People with a family history of skin cancer and those with excessive exposure to sunlight, such as outdoor workers.
- The risk is less for people with dark hair and brown or black skin. However, prolonged sun exposure can be bad for all skin types. Don't be complacent.

Sun safety code:

- Take care not to burn; this can take as little as 10 minutes.
- Cover up with loose clothing. Keep your clothing on so that you do not expose unprotected areas.
- Seek shade during the hottest part of the day and take your breaks in the shade.
- Apply high factor sunscreen generously and frequently to any parts of the body exposed to the sun; SPF15 or above.
- If you are concerned about moles changing shape or colour and itching, weeping or bleeding, see your GP immediately.

Questions:

- 1 Why do so many people die of skin cancer each year?
- 2 What is your skin type, and how should you protect it?

Further Information:- CIP Manual, Section 25