

# SUN SAFETY

## It is important to protect yourself from the sun for several reasons:

- To prevent sunburn, which hurts and looks bad
- To prevent wrinkled and leathery skin, which are signs of premature aging of the skin
- To prevent damage to the eyes
- To prevent skin cancer, which can be deadly

## Tips for staying safe in the sun:

### Sunscreen

- Wear sunscreen if you are going to be exposed to the sun for an extended period of time. Some people, such as those with light-colored skin or eyes, freckles and blond or red hair, sunburn faster than others. These people have less melanin. Melanin is a chemical in the skin that protects the skin from sun damage by reflecting and absorbing ultraviolet rays.
- Wear sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) rating of at least 15. The number rating tells you how much longer you can stay in the sun without getting sunburned. Higher SPFs offer more protection. For instance, if you normally burn after 30 minutes with no sunscreen, and you apply sunscreen with an SPF rating of 15, the sunscreen will give you 15 times the protection. This means that you will be protected for 15 times 30 minutes, or 450 minutes (seven and a half hours), longer than if you did not apply the sunscreen.
- Apply sunscreen to all parts of the body that will be exposed to the sun, including the face, arms, legs, stomach, back, tops of ears, shoulders, back of neck, tops of feet, top of head, etc.
- Apply sunscreen 15 to 30 minutes before sun exposure. Reapply as often as the product label recommends. Reapply sunscreen more often if you go swimming or you sweat a lot, even if the product label says the sunscreen is water-resistant.
- Wear lip balm that contains SPF to protect your lips from burning.
- Be extra careful when going to a beach or swimming pool or on a boat. Sand and water reflect sun. This means they can intensify the sun's rays.
- Be extra careful between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., when the sun's rays are strongest.
- Be extra careful if you have a disease that is intensified by the sun (i.e., lupus), if you are on a medicine that increases your risk of sunburn or if you already have a sun-induced skin disorder.

### Additional Tips

- Protect your eyes by wearing sunglasses and a hat with a brim.
- Take frequent breaks from the sun by going in shade or indoors.
- Drink lots of water when it is hot and humid, even if you are not thirsty. Your body needs to replace fluids when you sweat.



**Want more information? Ask your pharmacist!**

