

# Family and Community Health “Connections” in Tom Green County



## Sun Safety



Spending time outside is a great way to be physically active, reduce stress, and get vitamin D. You can work and play outside without raising your skin cancer risk by protecting your skin from the sun.

Most skin cancers are caused by too much exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light. UV rays are an invisible kind of radiation that comes from the sun, tanning beds, and sunlamps. UV rays can damage skin cells.

Protection from UV rays is important all year, not just during the summer. UV rays can reach you on cloudy and cool days, and they reflect off of surfaces like water, cement, sand, and snow. In the continental United States, UV rays tend to be strongest from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daylight saving time (9 a.m. to 3 p.m. standard time).

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The UV Index forecasts the strength of UV rays each day. If the UV index is 3 or higher in your area, protect your skin from too much exposure to the sun.

### **How to Protect Your Skin From the Sun**

#### **SHADE**

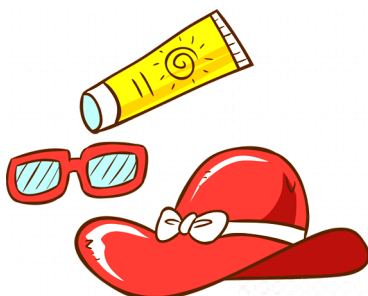
You can reduce your risk of sun damage and skin cancer by staying in the shade under an umbrella, tree, or other shelter. Your best bet to protect your skin is to use sunscreen or wear protective clothing when you're outside—even when you're in the shade.

#### **CLOTHING**

When possible, wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants and skirts, which can provide protection from UV rays. If wearing this type of clothing isn't practical, try to wear a T-shirt or a beach cover-up. Clothes made from tightly woven fabric offer the best protection.

A wet T-shirt offers much less UV protection than a dry one, and darker colors may offer more protection than lighter colors. Some clothing is certified under international standards as offering UV protection.

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## HAT

For the most protection, wear a hat that has a brim all the way around that shades your face, ears, and the back of your neck. A tightly woven fabric, such as canvas, works best to protect your skin from UV rays. Avoid straw hats with holes that let sunlight through. A darker hat may offer more UV protection.

If you wear a baseball cap, you should also protect your ears and the back of your neck by wearing clothing that covers those areas, using sunscreen, or staying in the shade.

## SUNGLASSES

Sunglasses protect your eyes from UV rays and reduce the risk of cataracts. They also protect the tender skin around your eyes from sun exposure.

Sunglasses that block both UVA and UVB rays offer the best protection. Most sunglasses sold in the United States, regardless of cost, meet this standard. Wrap-around sunglasses work best because they block UV rays from sneaking in from the side.

## SUNSCREEN

Put on broad spectrum sunscreen that blocks both VA and UVB rays and has an SPF of 15 or higher before you go outside. Don't forget to put a thick layer on all exposed skin. Get help for hard-to-reach places like your back. And remember, sunscreen works best when combined with other options.

Sunscreen is not recommended for babies who are 6 months old or younger. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recommends keeping infants out of the sun during midday and using protective clothing if they have to be in the sun.



“Sunscreen isn’t an all-protective force field. It is intended to be combined with other sun-safety approaches.”



### SPF

Sunscreens are assigned a sun protection factor (SPF), which is a number that rates how well they block UV rays. Higher numbers indicate more protection. You should use a broad spectrum sunscreen with SPF of 15 or higher.

### Reapplication

Sunscreen wears off. Put it on again if you stay out in the sun for more than 2 hours and after swimming, sweating, or towel-drying off.

### Expiration date

Check the sunscreen’s expiration date. Sunscreen without an expiration date has a shelf life of no more than 3 years. Its

Studies have shown that consumers use much less sunscreen than is needed to effectively protect, so use more than you think you need.

Source: [https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/basic\\_info/sun-safety.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/basic_info/sun-safety.htm)

# The Truth About Sunscreen: 7 Facts That Will Set You Straight for Skin Protection This Summer



## **Sunscreen is protective.**

Sunscreen does protect your skin from the sun's rays, when used as directed. However, some research suggests that sunscreen users get burned frequently, which may be because they use too little, apply it/reapply it too late, or use it to engage in otherwise unsafe sun exposure, like staying out longer or not wearing protective clothing.

## **It isn't just a girl thing.**

Few men look forward to having wrinkles, age spots, or discolored skin. Sunscreen isn't just a product for women; using sunscreen and other sun-safety strategies is critical for anyone looking to prevent the premature aging that comes with sun exposure—not to mention helping prevent skin cancer.

## **You have to use a lot.**

That means a shot glass full to cover the full body, a fourth to a half teaspoon for the face. Studies have shown that consumers use much less sunscreen than is needed to effectively protect, so use more than you think you need, or get a measuring spoon!

## **Coconut oil is not a good sunscreen.**

Although some sunscreens contain coconut oil, the oil itself is not adequate to prevent skin damage. Coconut oil may extend the time to burn for some individuals, but the level of UV protection is very low and may be highly variable by source, so don't rely on coconut oil to protect your skin!

## **Don't use it solo; it's important to use a combination of sun safety approaches for effective sun protection.**

Sunscreen isn't an all-protective force field. It is intended to be combined with other sun-safety approaches, like covering up with clothing, staying in the shade, wearing a hat, and scheduling activities to avoid times of day when the sun is most intense (10AM – 4PM).!

## **Sunscreen is NOT a "Do-It-Yourself" kind of product.**

Sunscreen is a non-prescription drug intended to protect the skin. You wouldn't strap your child in using a seatbelt you made at home, so why protect their skin with untested homemade sunscreen? If you're concerned about the safety of ingredients in sunscreen, there are other options. You can move your outdoor activities to morning or evening, when the sun is less intense, and cover up, wear a hat, stay in the shade, and use a store-bought, mineral-based sunscreen.

## **It doesn't have to be greasy.**

Recent advances in sunscreen technology have led to a variety of improved textures and consistencies of sunscreens, from sticks for those who like to roll it on, to light milks that spread easily and leave no white cast. The days of thick pastes are over, but you still need to apply a lot, so pick a product with a texture you really like!

Anne K. Julian, Ph.D.  
Behavioral Scientist,

Division of Cancer Prevention and Control

Source:

<https://blogs.cdc.gov/cancer/2019/05/01/the-truth-about-sunscreen-7-facts-that-will-set-you-straight-for-skin-protection-this-summer/>

## Apricot Blueberry Yogurt Dessert

Servings: 4 parfaits

### Ingredients

- 1/3 cup apricot preserves
- 2 cups blueberries fresh
- 2 cups low-fat Greek Yogurt plain or vanilla
- 1/2 cup low-fat granola
- 2 tablespoons silvered almonds
- 4 tsp agave nectar or honey (optional)
- 5 dried or fresh apricots sliced in half (optional)



### Instructions

1. Place apricot preserves in a microwavable safe bowl. Heat for 15 seconds. Add blueberries and toss to coat
2. Spoon 1/4 cup of yogurt into each glass, top each serving with 1/3 cup of blueberry mixture, and 1 1/2 Tablespoons granola. Repeat the layers. Top with granola and silvered almonds, dried apricots and 1 teaspoon of agave nectar or honey. Serve chilled.



**Courtney Redman, CEA/FCH**

113 W. Beauregard  
San Angelo, Texas 76903  
325-659-6527  
cjbarbee@ag.tamu.edu

### County Website:

[http://  
tomgreen.agrilife.org/fch/](http://tomgreen.agrilife.org/fch/)

### Facebook:

[https://www.facebook.com/  
TomGreenCountyFCH/](https://www.facebook.com/TomGreenCountyFCH/)

## Tom Green EEA News

TEEA State Conference

Theme: “Rockin’ Around with TEEA”

Lubbock, Texas

September 13-14, 2022

@ Lubbock Memorial Civic Center

### Hotel block at:

MCM Elegante

Call for reservation at 806-763-1200,  
provide code TEEA

\$99 + tax / breakfast included

## Family & Community Health “Connections” is provided by these Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service Family and Community Health Agents:

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Kailey Roberts, Burnet County  
Milissa Wright, Coke/Concho/Menard/Sterling  
Chanie Schaffner, Coleman County  
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Kim Miles, Taylor County  
Courtney Redman, Tom Green County  
Barbara Brown, BLT Regional Project Specialist  
Stacy Drury, D7 Regional FCH Program Leader

