



Canadian Cancer Society | Société canadienne du cancer

# Protect your child

*Smart SunSense habits to safeguard your child*



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1 888 939-3333 | [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)

## PROTECT YOUR CHILD FROM THE SUN

*As parents we need to help our children be extra careful when outside.*

Regardless of their age and whether or not they tan easily, all children need to be protected from overexposure to the sun.

Try to keep your child out of the sun between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. or whenever the UV index is 3 or higher. In general, the UV index in Canada can be 3 or more between April and September, even when it's cloudy.

Babies require extra protection because their skin has less natural protection against the sun's rays, meaning sunburns happen more quickly than in adults.

### Shade



Always keep infants out of direct sunlight. Put strollers and playpens in the shade. Trees or a large umbrella work well. This will not only protect their skin against sun damage but will also prevent dehydration and sunstroke. Use stroller hoods or breathable fabric to cover infants in strollers when outside.

### Clothing



Keep your child comfortably covered with clothing that covers their arms and legs. Tightly woven clothing offers a natural protection from the sun. Don't forget to cover their shoulders and necks as these can get easily burned. Wide-brimmed hats provide more protection than baseball caps. Also make sure they have dry clothing after playing in water as wet clothing can lose up to half of its UV protection.

### Sunscreen



For babies, a little sunscreen may be used on small areas of the body such as the face and the back of the hands if adequate clothing and shade are not available but it is safer to keep them out of the sun.

Use a broad spectrum sunscreen with an SPF 30 or higher on exposed skin. Apply at least 20 minutes before they go outside. Reapply often and don't forget their nose, ears, cheeks and tops of their feet. Use a waterproof sunscreen on children playing in or near water, and reapply often.

Don't put sunscreen around your child's eyes. Check with a health care professional before using sunscreen on children less than 6 months of age.

### Cloudy days and in water too



Even on a cloudy day children can get a sunburn. Ultraviolet rays can get through clouds, fog and haze! Ultraviolet rays can also pass through water, so children will need protection when swimming or playing in the water.

### Medications and moisturizers



The sun and certain medications do not mix. If your child has been prescribed medication, consult your doctor or pharmacist before letting your child go out in the sun. Using baby oil as a moisturizer before your child goes outside will make the effect of the sun stronger and could cause your child to burn faster.

### Set a good example yourself.



Children learn by watching their parents.

## Additional resources

We offer publications on a wide range of specific cancers and on topics related to cancer prevention. Our booklets and pamphlets are available free of charge. To find them:

- Drop by your nearest Canadian Cancer Society office.
- Visit [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)
- Call our caring information specialists at 1 888 939-3333.

Experts review our cancer information to ensure accuracy and reliability.



## What we do

Thanks to the work of our volunteers and staff and the generosity of our donors, the Canadian Cancer Society is leading the way in the fight against cancer. The Society:

- funds excellence in research on all types of cancer
- advocates for healthy public policy
- promotes healthy lifestyles to help reduce cancer risk
- provides information about cancer
- supports people living with cancer

Contact us for up-to-date information about cancer, our services or to make a donation.



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