

PLAYING DEFENCE

What you need to know about intercepting summer's destructive rays. By Lesa Hannah

We don't need to school you on why it's imperative to use sunscreen. But what you should know is that wearing it doesn't give you licence to frolic on the beach all day. "The idea of sunscreen is not to put it all over, then run around in a thong. It doesn't work that way," says Hamilton, Ontario-based dermatologist Dr. Peter Vignjevic. That makes sense, given that no sunscreen can protect you completely.

Since no one is going to sit indoors all season, here are the ground rules: Wear at least SPF 30, and only one that offers broad-spectrum coverage, which protects against both UVA (present all day, all year long, and causes aging) and UVB rays (strongest in summer, especially between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., and causes burns). Look for a combination of chemical and physical blockers, such as Parsol 1789 plus Mexoryl SX and titanium dioxide, suggests Vignjevic. "You have to block all types of ultraviolet light. It's like preventing a robber from getting into the house; you have to lock the windows and the doors," he says. And that includes making sure you apply enough product—one teaspoon for your face and one for both hands, two for each arm, and three to four for each large area (back, chest, stomach) and for each leg—every two to three hours, and at least 15 minutes before you even venture outdoors, so that it can soak in.

Your hair also requires safeguarding, especially if it's been coloured. "The cuticle is even more open and has become weaker," says Greg May of Greg May Hair Architects in Toronto. "The heat from the sun also opens the cuticle, and the UVA and UVB rays can not only damage the hair but also fade the colour." Most hair sunscreens use sunflower oil extract, known for its photo-protective qualities. Apply one to wet hair, he advises, for optimal absorption. □



Vichy
Capital Soleil
Total Block
Cream SPF
45 (\$23, at
drugstores)

**Banana
Boat**
Ultra
Mist Clear
Sunblock SPF
30 (\$10, at
drugstores)

Coppertone
Continuous
Spray
Sunblock SPF
30 (\$13, at
drugstores)

Phyto Plage
Protective
Sun Veil
(\$30, at
salons)

Frédéric Fekkai
Invisible
Protect Sun
Bandana
(\$26, at Holt
Renfrew)

**La Roche-
Posay**
Anthelios
Spray 30
SPF (\$24, at
drugstores)

Avène
Very High
Protection
Lotion 30
SPF (\$29, at
drugstores)

Aveeno
Sunblock
Spray SPF
30 (\$14, at
drugstores)