

Subscription Today's Paper Spec Auctions **Tuesday, June 14, 2011** Connect with Facebook | Login | Register



Search this Site Search Hamilton Businesses

Full Text Archive  Business Name

Home News Sports What's On Opinion Living Community More Announcements | Jobs | Cars | Real Estate | Rentals | Classifieds | Flyers

FAMILY & PARENTING FOOD **HEALTH & FITNESS** HOROSCOPES STYLE TRAVEL WHEELS YOUR HOME

HOT TOPICS HOUSE OF COMMONS JON'S JOURNEY: INTERACTIVE MAP HAMILTON NEXT YOUNG PROFESSIONALS CODE RED ETERNAL PAIN

Home > Living > Healthfitness > Six myths about sunscreen

Small Large Print Email Favourite BOOKMARK

Amy Kenny | Tue Jun 14 2011 | 4 | 0 Recommend

## Six myths about sunscreen

A damp, dark spring has left many of us welcoming the summer sun with open arms, but maybe we shouldn't be so hasty.

According to the Canadian Cancer Society, an estimated 79,600 Canadians will be diagnosed with skin cancer this year. Another 1,290 will die of the disease.

One of the first lines of defence is understanding the myths and realities of sun safety.

### Myth No. 1 — Sunscreen blocks vitamin D absorption.

Vitamin D, essential in establishing and maintaining bone strength, is generated by our bodies when our skin is exposed to sunlight. As such, many are hesitant to block it.



sunscreen Hamilton dermatologist Dr. Peter Vignjevic says people generally apply sunscreen too sparingly.

photos.com

However, Dr. Channy Muhn and Dr. Nathan Rosen (both of Dermetics in Burlington) say wearing sunscreen doesn't significantly diminish the dose of vitamin D we receive from the sun.

Dr. Peter Vignjevic, a Hamilton-based dermatologist, agrees. He says two to three minutes of exposure is enough to net your daily recommended intake, and stresses that the sun isn't the only source of vitamin D. It's also found in milk, eggs and some fish. Alternatively, taking dietary supplements in the amount of 2,000 IU daily is sufficient.

### Myth No. 2 — I have a good base to protect against sun damage.

A base *is* sun damage. Tanning isn't a substitute for sunscreen — it's your body's defence against further harm. That said, don't assume that because you've already burned, you're a lost cause.

According to Lynda MacNiven, senior co-ordinator of prevention with the Ontario Division of the Canadian Cancer Society, it can take 10 to 30 years for skin cancer to develop. Sun damage builds with repeated exposure, so it's never too late to start using sunscreen — whether during the course of a day or a lifetime.

### Myth No. 3 — The chemicals in sunscreen are more dangerous than a burn.

Select a City

- [ABBOTSFORD](#)
- [ALLISTON / INNISFIL](#)
- [50% off Mountain Bikin](#)
- [AURORA / NEWMARKET](#)
- [56% off Paintball Laser](#)
- [BARRIE](#)
- [50% off Mountain Bikin](#)

Popular Read Recommended Shared

Today | This Week | This Month

- [Check under the lid: The scoop on poop](#)
- [Six myths about sunscreen](#)
- [Stepping up to MyPlate](#)
- [Early autism screening opposed by Mac...](#)
- [Scientists search for cause, treatment...](#)

## Hamilton Top Jobs »

Rothsay A Division of Maple Leaf

Customer Service  
TPSN ENTERPRISES INC

Some of the chemicals used in sunscreen (including Paba and Oxybenzone) are chosen for their ability to absorb and reflect UVA and UVB rays. But what happens when our skin absorbs these chemicals?

Muhn and Rosen say that while laboratory testing has found some of the chemicals in sunscreen can be carcinogenic to rodents, there are currently no ties to cancer in humans.

“It’s a case of theoretical risk versus absolute known risk,” say Muhn and Rosen. “We know squamous and melanoma risk is lessened with routine sunscreen use. There is no data now to suggest sunscreens cause cancer of any type in humans.”

**Myth No. 4 — I’m only going out for an hour.**

Short, intense periods of exposure can be the worst type, especially between the oft-maligned hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Depending on your skin’s pigmentation, 20 minutes in the midday sun can be more than enough time to sustain a significant burn. Avoid this by applying sunscreen every time you head outside. Don’t forget easy-to-miss areas like feet, toes, the back of the neck, hands, nose, lips and ears, including the top and inner bowl of the ear — all places Muhn and Rosen say they regularly cut cancer from.

**Myth No. 5 — It’s not very sunny today.**

Even the most devoted sunscreen advocate can forget to lotion up on an overcast afternoon or a cold, snowy morning, but UVA and UVB rays affect us year-round. Though fall and winter UVB rays (responsible for bad burns) aren’t as powerful as they are in the summer, UVA rays (responsible for wrinkles and sagging skin) remain strong from season to season. That means we can experience sun damage from January through to December.

**Myth No. 6 — All sunscreens are created equal.**

The standard recommendation for both children and adults is to use an SPF of at least 30. However, people generally apply sunscreen so sparingly they’re only getting one half to one third the protection listed on the bottle. For optimum protection, follow Vignjevic’s guidelines:

Start with a sunscreen that guards against UVA and UVB rays (not all do). Make sure the bottle hasn’t expired as chemicals can degrade after expiry, decreasing the effectiveness of your sunscreen. Use one teaspoon for the face, two for each arm, three for the chest and back, and four for each leg. Apply 20 minutes before going outside, rubbing the cream in completely. Apply every two hours thereafter. If you’re swimming or sweating, even when using waterproof sunscreen, reapply every hour.

For more information, contact Vignjevic at [doctorv.ca](http://doctorv.ca) or Muhn and Rosen at [dermetics.ca](http://dermetics.ca).

*Special to The Hamilton Spectator*

AZ Drivers

[Click for More LocalWork.ca Hamilton Jobs](#)

**Sponsored Video »**



**User Comments**

[Login to comment](#)

Newest first



By: **Zenman**  
Jun 14, 2011 2:20 PM

I wouldnt put any synthetic products on my skin, medications are absorbed through your skin as well as harmful chemical. Just dress properly, and there are people that have had skin cancer and topically rubbed the resin from cannabis plants on there skin cancer and it went away!!

[Agree](#) | [Disagree](#) | [Offensive](#)



By: **fakebookuser**  
Jun 14, 2011 1:58 PM

**It's a good message, but overstated**

The anti-sun people continue to overstate certain parts of their message. I see they've backed off from 'any amount of sun exposure is dangerous' (sponsored by Nintendo, perhaps?) but persist with the claim that a tan is a sign of damage, and developing cancer. I wonder if any of these dermatologists are brown, or black, skinned. How do they explain this to their relatives? Basically, 'you are a walking cancer bomb'.

[Agree](#) | [Disagree 1](#) | [Offensive](#)



- [Deals](#)
- [Flyers](#)
- [Coupons](#)
- [Products](#)

- SVELVIK Queen Bed Frame**  
IKEA
- Canada Day SPECIAL**  
Phatboy Fireworks
- Strawberries**  
Metro



**By: villageidiot**  
Jun 13, 2011 5:42 PM

### a friend

I knew used tanning beds since the age of 15, and by the time she was 26 years old her skin looked like an alligator back. nasty.

[Agree 1](#) | [Disagree](#) | [Offensive](#)



**By: sp1975**  
Jun 13, 2011 4:53 PM

### Dr. V is great!

I feel for all my female friends who have extreme sun damage and think it makes them look good...

[Agree 2](#) | [Disagree](#) | [Offensive](#)



View local **real estate listings**



View local **car listings**



View local **flyers & coupons**



View local **job listings**



View local **apartment rentals**

## TheSpec.com

### About Us

- [About Us](#)
- [Advertise With Us](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
- [Corporate Sales](#)
- [Manage My Subscription](#)
- [Print Editions](#)
- [Site Map](#)
- [Terms of Use](#)
- [Today's Paper](#)
- [Work for Us](#)
- [2010 Baby Review](#)

### Local Info

- [Announcements](#)
- [Jobs](#)
- [Cars](#)
- [Real Estate](#)
- [Rentals](#)
- [Classifieds](#)
- [Flyers](#)

### Local Sites

- [AncasterNews.com](#)
- [DundasStarNews.com](#)
- [FlamboroughReview.com](#)
- [HamiltonMountainNews.com](#)
- [InsideHalton.com](#)
- [NiagaraThisWeek.com](#)
- [Sachem.ca](#)
- [StoneyCreekNews.com](#)

### Affiliates

- [Goldbook.ca](#)
- [InsuranceHotline.com](#)
- [Leasebusters.com](#)
- [MyHolidayHomeRental.com](#)
- [OurFaves.com](#)
- [Save.ca](#)
- [Toronto.com](#)
- [WagJag.com](#)

### Daily Newspaper

- [Guelph Mercury](#)
- [Waterloo Region Record](#)
- [Toronto Star](#)
- [Settlement of Canadian](#)
- [Copyright Class Action](#)

