

Self Care Information for Patients: Sunburn

Summary

You can prevent sunburn symptoms by using sun protection products.

These can be bought in a pharmacy or supermarkets without a prescription.

What can you do to help?

- Use sunscreens from spring to autumn.
- Apply sunscreens thickly and frequently (approximately every two hours).
- Use sunscreen preparations with the highest sun protection factor (SPF).
- A Minimum of factor 30 provides maximum protection (protects against UVB) and at least 4 Star UVA protection.
- Spend time in the shade when the sun is strongest. In the UK, this is between 11 am and 3 pm from March to October.
- Avoid burning by covering up with suitable clothing, a hat and sunglasses.
- Make sure the sunscreen is not past its expiry date.
- Ensure sunscreen is applied liberally and regularly throughout the day.

When shall I see a General Practitioner (GP)?

- If a young child or baby has sunburn as their skin is particularly sensitive.
- If you have signs of severe sunburn such as blistering or swelling of the skin, chills, high temperature of over 38°C or dizziness, headaches and feeling sick which are all symptoms of heat exhaustion.

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