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Sun Protection: Reviewed & Recommended



A for alert



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June 28, 2010

Posted by copley

Sun safety tips from a reformed Florida girl

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By Copley

The sun is a strange beast. During childhood, it is a source of joy – a sign of summer and an invitation to get out from indoors. But at a certain age, when one becomes cognizant of its malign powers, the sun mutates from friend to foe. It is only in the past few years that I have come to comprehend all the signs of aging for which the sun is responsible. Big brown spots. Small white spots. Moles. Leathery skin. Deep wrinkles. Tiny blood vessels. All of these lovely skin accouterments have the sun to thank for their existence. And then there's skin cancer, lurking amid atypical moles and scaly lesions stimulated by the sun. When you think about it, the sun is the skin's worst nightmare.

I learned at an early age that the sun is capable of great evils, especially for someone with my fair skin, prone to proliferating freckles and painful burns. Slathering sun block on the younger me often came with kicking and screaming. But it was critical, since I spent many of my days splashing and running around under the Florida sun. I was persnickety about my choice of sunscreen, amenable only to oil-free face sticks and body sprays. Years of applying only the bare minimum of sun protection has left me mottled and moley. I'm not happy about it, but I've learned my lesson.

Nonetheless, there were moments when my judgement slipped. Buying a multi-pack of visits to roast in a tanning booth before prom and during a semester abroad in Ireland were my most flagrant skin abuses. But I was young and vain, more focused on having a healthy tan in the here and now than suffering the health consequences in the far-off future. Nowadays, my sunscreen dilemma combines the prerequisites of providing broad spectrum protection, achieving compatibility with my daily moisturizer (since sunscreen alone is not sufficient for my dry skin), avoiding a greasy sheen or ghostly pallor, bypassing breakouts, and keeping icky chemicals at bay. Yes, it's a tall order.

As for the rest of my body, no part goes uncovered if I plan to be in the sun for longer than my morning commute. My lips get a layer of [Mission Skincare Lip Balmer SPF 15](#), one of the only SPF-charged balms I've found that lasts a long time and doesn't taste like sunscreen. My décolleté gets shielded and smoothed out by [Skin2Skin Organic Anti-Photoaging SPF 30](#) (\$68), a tinted sunscreen that combines zinc oxide and titanium oxide, along with all sorts of organic wonders. Warning: Do not get this sunscreen near white clothing – it should be treated with as much caution as liquid foundation.

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