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BEAUTY & HEALTH

Summer Skin Savers

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING WE CAN DO FOR OUR SKIN IS **PROTECT IT FROM THE SUN**



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The skin, our body's most important protective barrier from the outside world, is constantly bombarded by the negative influences of the environment. Environmental effects on the skin not only put us at risk for precancers and skin cancers, but they also accelerate the aging process and ultimately cause sagging skin and wrinkles. Protection and prevention is vital all year round, but especially during the spring and summer months when we spend a great deal of our time outside.

The most important thing we can do for our skin is protect it from the sun. The use of sunscreens with SPF 50 or greater is vitally important when we are outdoors participating in summer activities. New sunscreens with UVA stabilizing agents are especially effective because it is the UVA rays that cause brown spots and ultimately cause wrinkles and skin cancers. Stability agents such as Helioplex allow sunscreens to work much more effectively over a broader UV range, and last up to four to six hours without reapplying.

The use of topical antioxidants can also help protect our skin from the damaging effects of free radicals caused by both pollution and sun. Newer antioxidants such as CoffeeBerry-based RevaleSkin have very high levels of antioxidant activity and can be looked at as a protectant as well as something that may prevent future skin problems. Retinoids such as Retin-A or Renova also

can help sun damage but the corollary is that they tend to thin out the top layer of skin, the stratum corneum and may make us more sensitive to sunburn.

Because we tend to squint and grimace a great deal in the sun, the summer and spring are also very good times to prevent wrinkles with treatments such as Botox. Botox can prevent us from furrowing our brows and squinting in the sun, thus preventing the future formation of lines and wrinkles.

The sun also can exacerbate conditions such as rosacea and treatments such as photorejuvenation may also improve our appearance during the summer months by decreasing blood vessels and red spots associated with rosacea.

No matter what we do, we should take as much care as possible to protect all of our skin. Not just with the use of sunblock, but also with sun protective clothing and commonsense, which essentially means that whenever possible we should minimize significant sun. **SA**

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