

A Review of Identified Barriers to Sunscreen Adherence for Skin Cancer Protection

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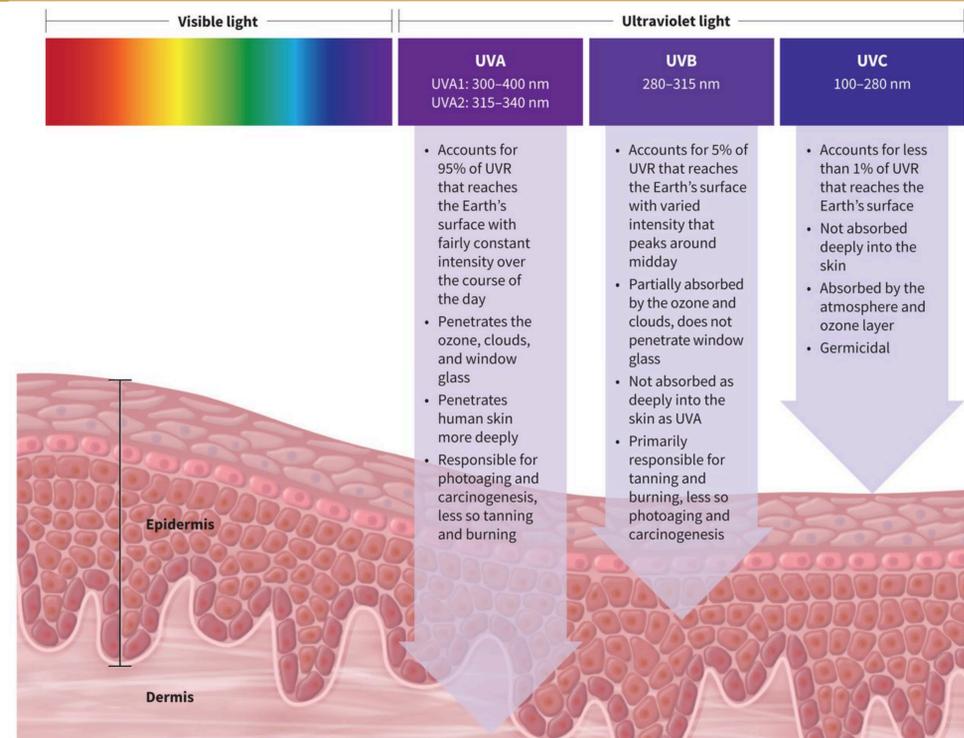
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Introduction

- Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the US and worldwide
- A clear risk factor for all types of skin cancer (basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and melanoma) is UV exposure, whether artificial or natural
- It is well-understood that regular sunscreen use with an SPF of 30 or greater reduces the risk of skin cancers; and especially that of melanoma, which is responsible for a majority of skin cancer deaths
- The annual incidence of skin cancer cases, including melanoma, continues to rapidly rise in recent years
- This may have a strong association with low rates of daily sunscreen adherence.

Results

- Recent literature has identified multiple trends and barriers related to sunscreen adherence.
- The most common barriers or associations noted:
 1. Forgetfulness
 2. Disliking feel/texture
 3. Time constraint
 4. Enjoying tanner skin as a healthier complexion
 5. Cost/low annual household income
 6. Less skin-sensitive
 7. Sedentary lifestyle
 8. Male sex
 9. Low UV or inclement weather
 10. Belief that skin cancer is not dangerous*



☀️
Sunscreen Use Survey
Dermatology Clinic
Wright State Physicians

- 1) What is your gender? _____
- 2) What is your age? 18-25 26-40 41-61 61-80 > 81
- 3) Please check the ONE that best describes your skin type:
 Never burn Rarely burn Always burn, never tan Burn initially, then tan
- 4) I routinely put sunscreen on (please select ONE of the following):
 Daily, throughout the year
 Daily, but only during the summer
 Most days, throughout the year
 Most days, but only during the summer
 Less often than not (less than 3 days a week)
 Intermittent use, before outside activities
 Never
- 5) I do NOT wear sunscreen on a daily basis because (please select ALL that apply):
 Forget
 Too much time
 Cost
 Don't get sunburned
 Don't use on cloudy days
 Dislike feel of sunscreen (i.e. greasy, sticky, thick)
 Dislike appearance of sunscreen (i.e. white residue)
 I don't think it does anything (i.e. prevent skin damage, wrinkles, moles, dark spots, skin cancer)
 Like natural tanning
 I heard ingredients are toxic to myself
 I heard ingredients are bad for the environment (i.e. damage to coral reefs)
 (For men) Seen as feminine
 Other: _____
- 6) I will wear sunscreen more regularly if (please check ALL that apply):
 I had more information on the benefits of sunscreen
 I had more information on the safety of sunscreen
 I had more information on when to use sunscreen
 I had sunscreen samples available from my dermatologist
 If SPF was included in a skin product I already use
 More affordable sunscreen options or coupons
 Electronic reminders to wear sunscreen
 Products that were easier to put on / time efficient
 Other: _____
- 7) Have you received information on sunscreen use and benefits (please select ALL that apply):
 Yes from my dermatologist
 Yes from my family doctor
 Yes from another health care provider
 No

Conclusion / Discussion

- The likely overarching reason to not use sunscreen is an overall lack of awareness. One study's data reflected 80% patients were aware of "adverse effects" of excessive sun exposure, yet only 46% understood the causal association with cancer.
- One study noted that there was *no significant difference* in successful UV protection (whether sunscreen use or protective clothing) in patients with a history of skin cancer versus without.
- Although significant literature identifies the common barriers to sunscreen adherence, we have not found a study that encompasses all of these barriers, as well as evaluates patients' own sunscreen practices and thoughts on what factors would improve their sunscreen usage.
- Our findings here suggest a need for future studies to evaluate reasons behind a lack of sunscreen adherence, assess our patient population's current sunscreen usage, and establish techniques aiming to increase sunscreen compliance.

References

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