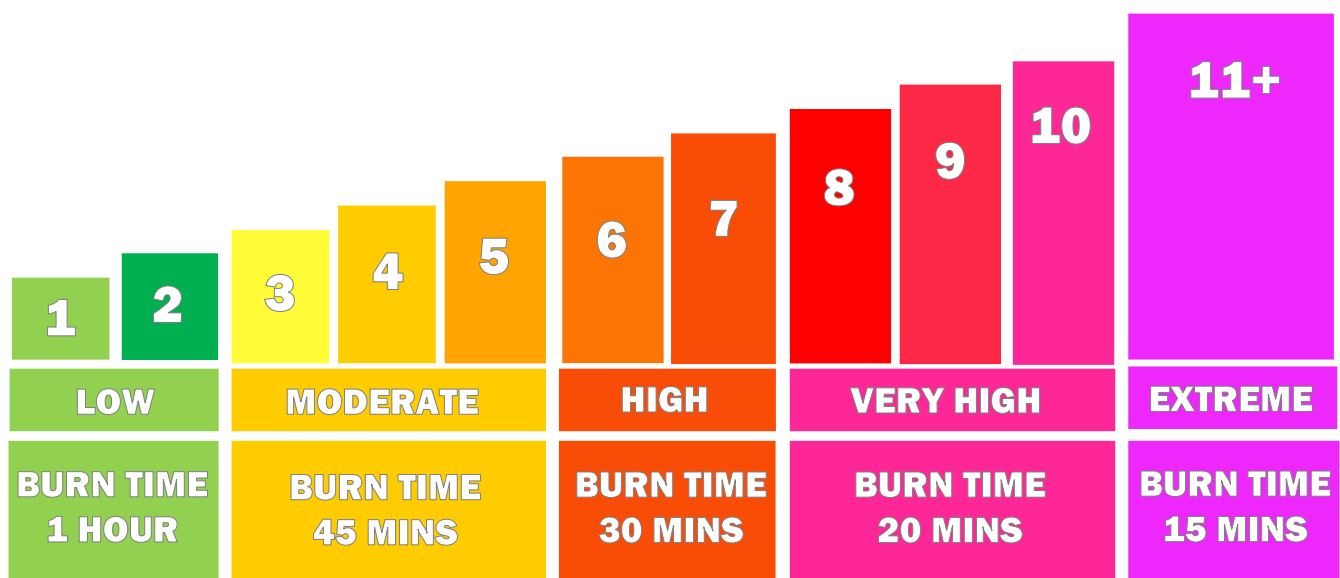




Sun Safety

With warmer days and higher temperatures comes stronger ultraviolet (UV) rays. Climate change greatly impacts the ozone layer globally causing UV rays to become stronger each year; due to this it is important to be mindful of the amount of sun exposure you receive each day. Before going outdoors in the summer months, check the weather for the expected UV index for the day.

In Canada, the UV index scale ranges from a low of zero to a high of 11+. This scale is used to measure the strength of the sun's UV rays throughout the day. When the UV index is higher, people are more susceptible to sun damage of the skin and eyes. When the UV index is 3 or higher, take precautions to protect yourself against harmful UV rays.



Protect Yourself

When working or participating in activities outdoors, if the UV index is 3 or higher be sure to protect yourself against harmful UV rays by following sun safety practices.

- **Use sunscreen** with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher. Apply sunscreen generously and wait at least 15 minutes for it to absorb before going outdoors. Reapply sunscreen at least every two hours when participating in outdoor work or activities.
- **Wear protective clothing** to protect your skin as much as possible. Wear light colored clothing made of breathable materials to protect arms and legs. Wear wide brim sun hats/baseball hats and sunglasses to protect your eyes against UV rays.
- **Drink plenty of fluids** when expected to be outdoors. Water should be your primary source of fluid intake when working or participating in activities outdoors. It is recommended to drink one 8 oz glass of water every 15-20 minutes when outdoors for an extended period of time.
- **Limit sun exposure** whenever possible by staying in shaded areas. In Canada, the UV rays are the strongest between the hours of 11:00am-3:00pm, so try to avoid direct sun exposure during those times.

Check your Skin

If you are routinely exposed to sun for a prolonged period of time, check your skin regularly to detect early signs of skin cancer. Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in the world. According to the Canadian Skin Centre Foundation (CSCF), over 80,000 cases of skin cancer are diagnosed in Canada each year. Skin cancer caused by UV rays consist of 80-90% of all skin cancer diagnosis globally. Due to an increase in the intensity of UV rays over the last 20 years, Canadians born in the 1990s are 2-3 times more likely to develop skin cancer in their lifetime compared to those born in the 1960s. Visit the [Canadian Skin Cancer Foundation](#) for information on how to check your skin.

Risk Factors for Developing Skin Cancer

- **Your complexion** plays a role in your likeliness of developing skin cancer. Those with fair skin have less protection against UV rays.
- **The number of moles** present increases your risk of developing skin cancer. Those with 50 or more moles are at greater risk.
- **Family history** of skin cancer; especially if the relation is a close relative can greatly increase your risk of developing skin cancer.
- **Using tanning beds** increases your risk of developing skin cancer by 75% when used before the age of 30. Studies have shown people are more likely to develop skin cancer from a tanning bed then they are to develop lung cancer from smoking.

Sun Safety

in Canada

Did you know? 1.7 million

outdoor workers in Canada are substantially exposed to the sun on the job.*



construction

The largest industrial groups exposed are:*



farming



building care and maintenance

If you employ outdoor workers, sun safety should be part of your health and safety program *

- ▶ Develop a sun safety policy
- ▶ Involve workers in the design and implementation of the program
- ▶ Review current processes for managing sun exposure, and assess the risks
- ▶ Implement control measures
- ▶ Monitor, review, and take corrective action as necessary

* Resources on developing a sun safety program: sunsafetyatwork.ca



Reduce the risk

Use sunscreen on exposed skin.

Apply waterproof sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 30 that has both UVA and UVB protection to all exposed areas. Re-apply every two hours and after sweating.

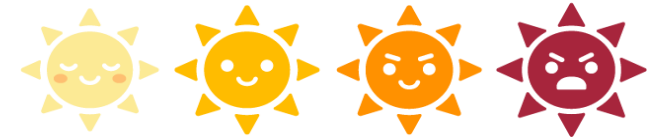
Protect your skin on cloudy days and in the winter too, especially in snow or at high altitudes.

Cover and protect your skin with a broad brimmed hat, a lightweight long-sleeved shirt, and long pants. Wear UV-blocking sunglasses to protect your eyes.

Examine the skin regularly for suspicious spots. Check your skin for irregularities such as moles. See a doctor if you have unusual skin conditions that don't heal in four weeks, sore ulcers or a scaly patch on the skin, a white patch on the lips that doesn't heal, or moles that grow quickly, change shape or colour, or bleed repeatedly.



Exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UV) can cause sunburn, premature skin aging, eye damage and skin cancer. Tans and sunburns are signs that UV rays have damaged the skin. This damage can occur quickly and stay with you for life.



Exposure Category

Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Extreme
UV Index 0 2	3 4 5	6 7	8 9 10	11+

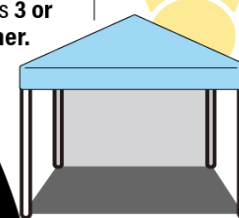
The UV index measures the strength of the sun's rays. The higher the number, the greater the need to take precautions. **Employers should:**

Avoid unnecessary exposure of workers to the sun, especially from **11 am - 3 pm**. Use protection when the UV index is 3 or higher.

Use shaded areas, set up shade structures, or use umbrellas, buildings, trees, or canopies to shield against the sun's rays.

Provide access to water.

Encourage breaks in areas where workers can cool down.



*CAREX Canada, <https://www.carexcanada.ca/>

CCOHS.ca
Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety