

July



National Health Observances



Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

UV Safety Month

Sponsor: American Academy of Ophthalmology (<http://www.aao.org/>) 

UV Safety Month is a great time to spread the message of sun, fun, and UV safety to your community. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the main cause of skin cancer. UV rays can also damage your eyes.

Anyone can get skin cancer, but the risk is greatest for people with:

- White or light-colored skin with freckles
- Blond or red hair
- Blue or green eyes

You can take these steps to help prevent skin cancer:

- Stay out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Use sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher.
- Cover up with long sleeves and a hat.
- Check your skin (<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/wyntk/skin/page15>) regularly for any changes.

Get the Word Out

Sample Media and/or Newsletter or Listserv Announcement

Cut and paste this text into your newsletter, listserv, or press release. Add local details and quotes from your organization.

Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in the United States. Ultraviolet (UV) rays from the sun are the main cause of skin cancer. UV damage can also cause wrinkles and blotchy skin.

These are just some of the reasons why **[your organization]** is proud to participate in UV Safety Month and help raise awareness of the risks of sun damage. During the month of July, join us in taking action to prevent skin cancer and reduce the risk of UV damage.

- [Add details about your local activities.]
- [Include quote from your organization.]

You can take steps today to protect your skin:

- Stay out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.





- Use sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher.
- Cover up with long sleeves and a hat.
- Check your skin regularly for changes.







For more information, visit **[insert your organization information]**.

Is your organization on Twitter? Send tweets.

Sample tweets: Tips for Sun Safety and Healthy Skin

The messages below are sample tweets. To send them via Twitter, click on the URL link provided after the “Tweet this message” phrase. Or, copy the message and paste it to your Twitter Stream and click post.

- Q. What is the main cause of skin cancer?
A. Being exposed to UV radiation from the sun. Learn more:
<http://1.usa.gov/kYZpVK> [Tweet this message:
<http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/kYZpVK&text=Q.+What+is+the+main+cause+of+skin+cancer?+A.+Being+exposed+to+UV+radiation+from+the+sun.+Learn+more:> 
- Warmer weather often means being outside more. When it comes to sun, be sure to take care of your skin: <http://1.usa.gov/ikEvE5> [Tweet this message:
<http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/ikEvE5&text=Warmer+weather+often+means+being+outside+more.+When+it+comes+to+sun,+be+sure+to+take+care+of+your+skin:> 
- Want to learn more about skin cancer? Check out this interactive tutorial from MedLine Plus: <http://1.usa.gov/I9Fvbl> [Tweet this message:
<http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/I9Fvbl&text=Want+to+learn+more+about+skin+cancer?+Check+out+this+interactive+tutorial+from+MedLine+Plus.> 
- Go the extra step. Protect your skin from skin cancer by doing a skin self-exam. Learn how: <http://1.usa.gov/kWqvoo> [Tweet this message:
<http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/kWqvoo&text=Go+the+extra+step.+Protect+your+skin+from+skin+cancer+by+doing+a+skin+self-exam.+Learn+how:> 

- Be cool. Wear your shades. UV rays can hurt your eyes. Get more tips for healthy eyes: <http://1.usa.gov/lgkLhw> [Tweet this message: <http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/lgkLhw&text=Be+cool.+Wear+your+shades.+UV+rays+can+hurt+your+eyes.+Get+more+tips+for+healthy+eyes:> 
- Did you know? Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in the U.S. Learn how to protect your skin: <http://1.usa.gov/ioGz4J> [Tweet this message: <http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/ioGz4J&text=Did+you+know?+Skin+cancer+is+the+most+common+type+of+cancer+in+the+U.S.+Learn+how+to+protect+your+skin:> 
- Skin cancer affects those of all ages, including older adults. Learn how and why: <http://1.usa.gov/jt7vYY> [Tweet this message: <http://twitter.com/share?url=http://1.usa.gov/jt7vYY&text=Skin+cancer+affects+those+of+all+ages,+including+older+adults.+Learn+how+and+why:> 
- Health Tip: Remember the sun is strongest from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Try to stay in the shade during these hours. [Tweet this message: <http://twitter.com/share?text=Health+Tip:+Remember+the+sun+is+strongest+from+11+a.m.+to+3+p.m.+Try+to+stay+in+the+shade+during+these+hours.> 
- Calculate your risk. Free tool to see how at-risk you may be for skin cancer: <http://bit.ly/lxiRDE> [Tweet this message: <http://twitter.com/share?url=http://bit.ly/lxiRDE&text=Calculate+your+risk.+Free+tool+to+see+how+at-risk+you+may+be+for+skin+cancer:> 
- Health Tip: Put sunscreen on 20 minutes before you go outside. [Tweet this message: <http://twitter.com/share?text=Health+Tip:+Put+sunscreen+on+20+minutes+before+you+go+outside.> 

Send e-cards

- healthfinder.gov: Summer Sun Safety (<http://healthfinder.gov/ecards/DisplayCard.aspx?CardID=21>)
- CDC: Prevent Skin Cancer (<http://www2c.cdc.gov/ecards/message/message.asp?cardid=314&category=233>)
- View More E-Cards (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/ecards/cards.aspx?jsript=1>)

Post a Web Badge


Add this free Web badge (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/nhoBadges.aspx#jul>) to your Web site, blog, or social networking profile to show your support for UV Safety Month.

Get Involved

Take action to raise awareness about UV Safety and skin cancer prevention.

1. Host a tree-planting event. Ask your organization's leaders to plant trees around the building for members to enjoy the outdoors while staying in the shade. Consider teaming up with local environmental organizations for cross-promotion.
2. Post skin safety tips near major entrances for members of your organization to read before stepping out into the sun.
3. Send a memo with vacation tips to your members. Encourage them to bring sunscreen, wear hats, and to avoid direct sunlight between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
4. Ask a health professional (a local dermatologist, registered nurse, public health official, etc.) to demonstrate how to check skin regularly for skin-cancer warning signs.
5. Host an indoor family health fair with recreational activities.

Adapted from the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

Contact the American Academy of Ophthalmology (<http://www.aao.org>)  at eyemd@aao.org for more information and materials.

Related Tools on healthfinder.gov

- Protect Your Skin from the Sun (<http://healthfinder.gov/prevention/ViewTopic.aspx?topicId=44>)


Personal Health Tools

- Skin Cancer Risk Tool (http://understandingrisk.cancer.gov/a_Skin/02.cfm)
- UV Index (<http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html>)

More Information (Health A-Z)

- Sun Protection (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/scripts/SearchContext.asp?topic=1019>)
- Skin Cancer (<http://healthfinder.gov/scripts/SearchContext.asp?topic=793>)

Resources

- American Academy of Ophthalmology(<http://www.aaopt.org>) 
UV Safety Month Sponsor
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Choose Your Cover, Skin Cancer Prevention campaign (<http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/chooseyourcover/>)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Skin Cancer (<http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/>)
- National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Aging, Information Center, AgePage: Skin Care and Aging (<http://www.nia.nih.gov/health/publication/skin-care-and-aging>)
- National Institutes of Health, National Cancer Institute, Skin Cancer Home Page (<http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/types/skin>)
- Occupational Health and Safety Administration, Protecting Yourself in the Sun (<http://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3166/osha3166.html>)
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, SunWise Kids School Program (<http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/>)

Tips to Plan a National Health Observance

Each National Health Observance (NHO) presents an opportunity to educate the public, energize coworkers and community members, and promote healthy behaviors. The NHO toolkits (<http://www.healthfinder.gov/nho/>) have the information and tools you need to get started.

Use the tips in this guide to plan a successful health-promotion event.

Planning:

Planning is critical to the success of any outreach effort. Contact the NHO sponsoring organization several months ahead of time to request up-to-date information and materials. (Contact information for each month's sponsoring organization is provided in each toolkit.)

- Consider enlisting the help of a community partner to help you plan and promote your event.
- Meet with those who will be valuable in your event coordination. To get started, sit down with potential partners, such as local businesses, local government agencies, key leaders, organizations, and media partners who share an interest in the NHO.
- Recruit volunteers, speakers, and community liaisons.
- Develop new or adapt existing materials to distribute at the event.
- Be sure to get them printed and/or copied in advance.
- Conduct a run-through before the event.

Promoting:

Develop a publicity and media outreach plan. Designate a media contact from your planning team and make sure he or she is available to answer questions and follow up on media requests.

- Start by creating a local media list.
- Use local-access television, radio, newspaper, and community calendars to promote your event.
- Post event announcements on your Web site. Encourage your partners to post similar announcements on their Web sites.
- Send a press release.
- Engage the media by offering a spokesperson from your organization or the community.

- Post flyers or posters throughout the community: on bulletin boards at local community centers, places of worship, libraries, post offices, local schools, recreation centers, clinics, pharmacies, stores, and businesses.
- Send flyers to each participating organization for distribution.

On the Day of the Event:

- Set up tables, chairs, and a check-in table prior to your event.
- Make plenty of sign-in sheets. Create a separate sign-in sheet for members of the media.
- Don't forget the refreshments!
- Make signs to direct participants and reporters to your event.


Tracking Media Coverage:

If you are distributing information to the media, plan ahead of time to track your coverage. There are both paid and free resources to track media coverage.

Free media tracking resources search for news articles based on your specific search term(s) and a date range. Some tracking services will send automatic email alerts to notify you when your event and/or keywords are mentioned.

Paid media tracking typically captures a wider range of media stories (both print and online) than free Internet search tools. Paid media tracking sources search within certain locations, news outlet types, and/or specific dates. Some paid media tracking tools offer email alerts and the ability to search archived Web and print news; they also allow users to tailor searches to obtain the most relevant media stories. Other paid media services monitor all forms of social media, including blogs, top video and image-sharing sites, forums, opinion sites, mainstream online media, and Twitter.

Be sure to share media coverage with your community partners, stakeholders, and all those who helped you plan and promote your event. Post a summary of media coverage on your organization's Web site. No matter the size or success of your event, remember that your efforts are key to educating the public about important health issues.

Last but not least, share your feedback and results with us here at healthfinder.gov. You can contact us at info@nhic.org or send us a tweet @healthfinder (<http://twitter.com/healthfinder>) .