



Skin Cancer and Sunburn Risk Control

Over exposure to ultra violet radiation (UV radiation) can cause skin cancer and sunburn.

What is UV Radiation (Ultra Violet Radiation)?

UV radiation is one of the forms of energy radiation that is emitted by the sun. Important characteristics of the UV radiation that reaches the surface of our earth are:

- It is a high-energy radiation that can cause damage to human cells and can cause cancer
- It causes sunburn
- It reaches it's highest levels in the middle part of the day and in summer because the sun is high in the sky
- It can pass through clouds and cause damage even on cloudy days but heavy cloud cover will reduce the intensity of the radiation
- It can pass through clothing or other materials that are loosely woven
- It can bounce off reflective surfaces eg. snow, water, concrete, and metal
- But we can't see UV radiation or feel it
- UV radiation is not sunlight. We can see sunlight. Sunlight is a visible form of radiation from the sun. And the level of heat we feel during the day does not depend upon the amount of UV radiation. The level of heat during the day is related to the amount of radiation (infrared radiation) that is present in the sunlight we receive.
- UV radiation is the best source of Vitamin D which is an essential vitamin for human health.

Protection from UV – How and When?

If we can't see it or feel it then how can we protect ourselves against UV at work and at home?

You may find the SunSmart app answers your needs. It tells you when you need protection and what to do. The Cancer Council developed this free app. You can download it from the Bureau of Meteorology at <http://www.bom.gov.au/uv/iphoneapp.shtml> or at the app store from your mobile phone.

On this app you can find the weather, temperature, UV level and the times of day when protection is needed. The protection times for the day are based on the UV information issued by the Bureau of Meteorology for your location. Also the app has a reminder function that alerts you to the protection needs they recommend for the day and when it is safe to get some UV for vitamin D.

The following resources carrying the NSW Government logo are particularly aimed at dealing with WHS requirements and recommendations for UV protection in workplace situations:

Skin Cancer and Outdoor Work: A Guide for Employers

UV Risk Control for Outdoor Work

10 Ways to Manage Sun Protection in Your Workplace

You can download these resources from:

<http://www.cancercouncil.com.au/71217/cancer-prevention/sun-protection/local-government-workplace/resources-for-local-government/skin-cancer-prevention-resources-for-workplaces/?pp=37087&cc=8166&&ct=35>

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