Sun Awareness Month

Contributor: Bonnie Stefansson
Wellness Facilitator, Interlake-Eastern RHA
bstefansson@ierha.ca


Photo Credit: Canva

May is Sun Awareness Month in Canda.

The Canadian Dermatology Association has important information on sun safety-tips, sunscreen use and early detection. **Check Your Skin Day** is May 3, 2026; this quick and simple 5-step guide on how to check your skin for unusual moles, spots or changes puts you in charge of your health. In Canada, we are exposed to UV rays all year round. It is especially important to practice sun safety in the summer months in Manitoba.

Protecting yourself and your family from the sun can prevent long term consequences such as melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers as well as eye cancer and lip cancer, pre-mature aging of the skin as well as short-term effects of sunburn. Skin cancer has one of the highest cure rates of all cancers when identified and treated early. According to the Canadian Cancer Society it is never too late to practice sun sense using these tips:

- Check the UV Index every day. Reduce time in the sun and use sun protection especially between 11am and 3pm, or any time of the day when the UV index is 3 or more.
- Stay in the shade, or create your own by covering up with clothing, a hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen. Being in the shade does not mean you are 100% protected, as UV rays can reach you by reflecting off surfaces around you.
- Clothing should be tightly woven or labeled with an UV protection factor (UPF).
- Sunglasses should be close-fitting to your face and have UVA and UVB protection.
- Sunscreen must be used properly. Use SPF of 30 or higher, use water-resistant sunscreen in the water and reapply every 2 hours or after sweating or swimming. The Canadian Cancer Society has helpful guidelines on how to properly use sunscreen.
- Sun safety is equally important in all seasons.

Be especially sure to use your sun-sense in these beautiful days of summer!

Check Your Skin Day May 3, 2026

Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority