

WHS Fact Sheet – Sun Safety

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world with 2 in 3 Australians developing some form of skin cancer before the age of 70. However, this does not need to be the case.

Nearly all skin cancers can be prevented. Here are some simple tips on how to work and study safely in the sun while reducing your risk of the damaging effects of Ultraviolet Radiation (UVR):

Tip 1 – Wear Protective Clothing

Slipping on clothing that covers the shoulders, arms and legs is one of the best ways to protect the skin from the damaging effects of UVR. Things to consider:

- Shirts with collars and sleeves
- Trousers or longer shorts and skirts that sit below the knees
- Loose clothing to allow air circulation and reduce heat stress
- Fabric that has a close, dense weave to prevent light passing through the fabric



Tip 2 – Use Sunscreen and Lip Protection

Slopping on sunscreen and lip protection reduce the amount of UVR that reaches the skin by either absorbing or reflecting the UVR away from your skin. Ensure that you utilise sunscreens that are SPF30+ or higher and water resistant. Sunscreen should be generously applied 20 minutes before going outside and every 2 hours thereafter.

Do not rely on sunscreen alone but use it in conjunction with other sun protection measures.

Tip 3 – Wear a Hat

Slapping on a hat will protect your face, ears and neck from UVR. The broader the brim of the hat, the more protection it offers. Broad-brimmed, bucket and legionnaire style hats are preferred.

Please note, baseball caps are not recommended as they do not provide adequate protection to the ears, cheeks or neck.



Tip 4 – Utilise Shaded Areas

Seeking shade will reduce the potential exposure to UVR, especially during the peak period of the day (10am – 2pm and 11am and 3pm during daylight savings). Consideration should be given to the reorganisation of tasks around the peak UVR period, along with the frequency and duration of rest periods.

Shade can be sought from permanent structures such as trees and buildings or non-permanent structures such as umbrellas, screens or tents.

Tip 5 – Wear sunglasses

Sliding on sunglasses will protect against UVR from the front and sides of your face. They should fit your face well and meet the Australian Standard AS1067.



If additional information is needed, please contact the [WHS Unit](#).