

Just soak up the sun



SKIN TALK Summer is synonymous with tanning. Dr Chytra V Anand suggests ways to battle the sun

Summer is here. And that means longer days, spending a lot more time outdoors and tanning. And one of the most common worries is about how much sunscreen to use.

Tanning is a natural response of the body to protect the skin against harmful UV ray. But it becomes important to make some changes in our daily skin regimen during the summer to reduce sun damage and to keep the skin looking youthful and fresh.

Update your summer beauty regimen with these essential summer skin care tips:

1. Slather some sunscreen

Sun protection is a top priority during the summer months, especially if you are planning to be outdoors for more than an hour.

Make sure you apply sunscreen from head to toe every day and use make-up that's infused with SPF for better protection.

Tip: Coconut oil blocks

about 20% of the sun's rays. But it is important to note that you must reapply the oil once it gets completely absorbed by the skin. Coconut oil also works better if you consume it every day. It fights inflammation from the inside and helps in the production of vitamin D.

2. Cover yourself

Although summer is the ideal weather to show some skin, keeping your skin exposed to the sun for too long is not recommended. Wear protective clothing that covers as much skin as possible. You might also want to wear a cap or hat with a broad brim and sunglasses to protect your face from the sun.

Tip: Apply a mixture of *besan* and curd on tanned skin. The curd has a cooling effect on the skin and the *besan* acts as a skin lightener. Mix a spoon *besan* with two spoons of curd, apply on the face and neck, let it sit for 15 minutes and rinse off with lukewarm water. Try this twice a week.

Tomato works wonders on tanned skin. Tomatoes contain lycopene, which works as a natural sunscreen. Simply apply the tomato juice on your face and rinse with lukewarm water.

3. Go for a water-based moisturiser

Don't make the mistake of skipping the moisturising routine altogether, as it's essential for your skin to remain hydrated. However, if you find your regular moisturiser too oily, go for a water-based one.

Tip: Wheat germ oil is a natural moisturiser and contains SPF 20. It is a great source of vitamin E and is a powerful antioxidant and sun protecting agent. It is generally light on the skin and does not clog pores, hence can be applied just before stepping out into the sun.

4. Keep your skin hydrated

In summers, it is but obvious that we sweat a lot. Drinking large amounts of water will keep you hydrated. Ditch those aerated drinks. Remember, that these drinks are full of sugar that is not good for your skin or your figure. You may infuse the water with fruits to make it more palatable.

5. Take antioxidant supplements

Antioxidants fight free radical damage, boost immunity, delay skin ageing and protect against sun damage. Talk to your doctor about a daily supplement of antioxidants. You may also want to start oral capsules for sun protection.

Tip: Tea leaves are wonderful sun-blocking agents. Take two spoons of tea leaves and soak them in half a cup of water overnight. Filter the water and use it as a cleanser.

(The author is founder and CEO, Kosmoderma skin and hair clinics)