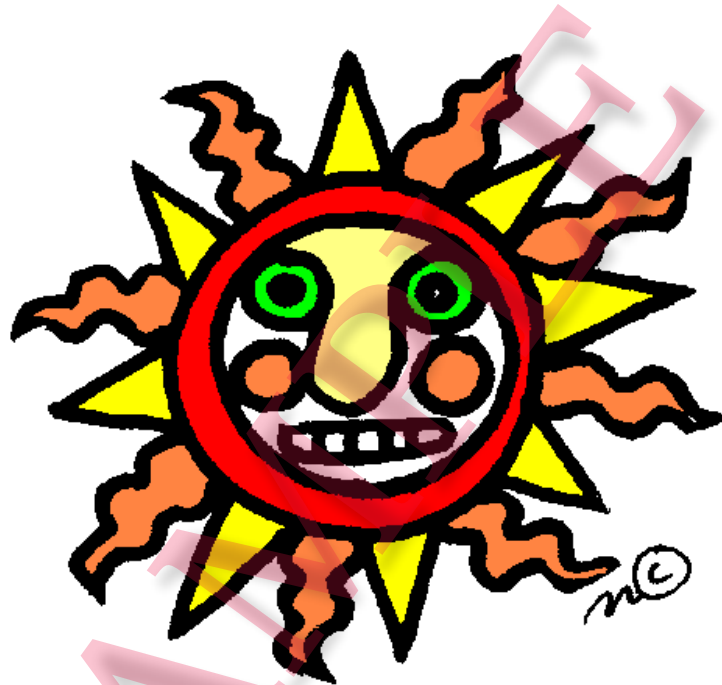


SunSafe in the Middle School Years



Primary Care Practice Manual

SunSafe in the Middle School Years
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SunSafe in the Middle School Years for Primary Care Practices

Clinicians, as respected health experts, are important community proponents and models of healthy behaviors. The well child visit is an opportunity to help middle school children take responsibility for their own health habits, including sun protection. Most of your middle school patients understand that sun protection prevents skin cancer, but few of them have heard messages from their providers. Most data suggests a small percentage of middle school children use sun protection. With a few simple changes, your entire practice can make sun protection counseling a routine part of patient care. If adolescents start making UV protection a part of their routine, their risk of skin cancer and other skin problems will be greatly reduced.

Helping your patients to protect themselves from too much sun exposure is an important but often overlooked preventive health message. With a few simple changes to your well-child visits, counseling for sun protection can become a regular part of your patient care. We are offering you suggestions for some office systems tools that you will be able to easily incorporate into your existing practice routine.

The goal is to discuss during well child visits or physicals with 10-13 year old patients and their parents how they can protect themselves from sun damage and why this is important to the child's health.

Everyone in your practice can contribute to educating adolescents and their parents about sun protection. Possible options for incorporating sun protection messages into your practice are:

Activity/Tools	Performed by...
Put up a poster* in the waiting room, exam room, or at the height/weight station <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Post UV Index daily	Receptionist
Put patient education materials* in exam rooms	Nurse/Medical Assistant
Assess and chart current sun protection behaviors	Nurse/Medical Assistant
Discuss sun protection strategies with the middle school patient and their parent	Clinician or Nurse/Medical Assistant

The above division of responsibility merely suggests how sun protection counseling might work in your office. Developing a system for integrating sun protection messages into well child visits in your practice will help kids with this important health habit.

It is important to talk with kids *early* and *routinely* about protecting their skin from sun damage. Avoiding skin damage from the sun during childhood and adolescence reduces the risk of skin cancer later in life.

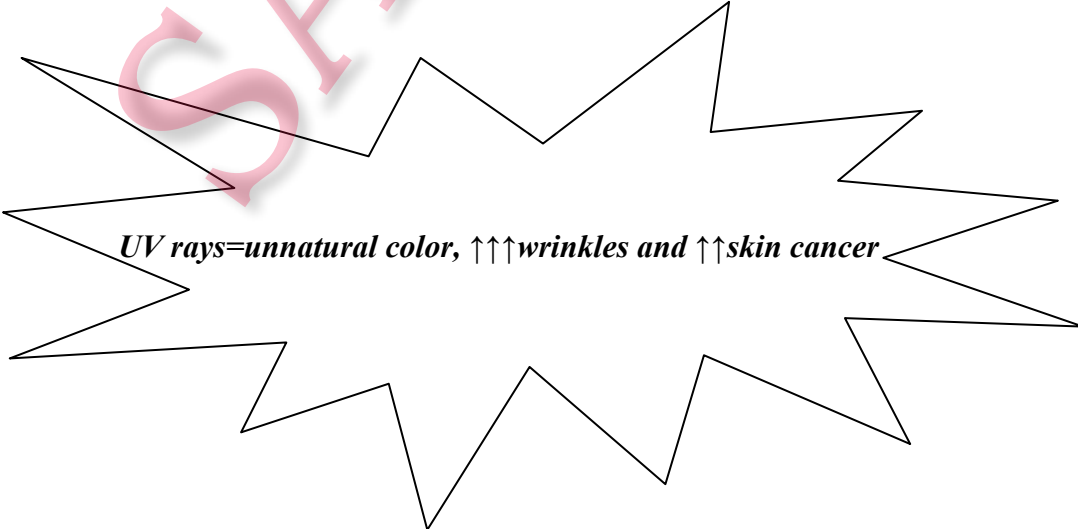
Kids can have FUN IN THE SUN AND BE SUNSAFE TOO.
Protecting skin from sun damage requires minor lifestyle

❖ Middle school students present particular counseling challenges. Prevalent attitudes influence how well they receive messages from authority. Adolescents, in regard to sun protection and behaviors, often assert

- they are not vulnerable.
- skin cancer pertains to adults and is distant to their lives.
- tan skin is attractive.
- protecting skin from the sun too much trouble.

❖ Which messages might work? Adolescents relate best to immediately relevant benefits of protecting skin from the sun.

- Protect your and your friends' skin and keep looking good
- Be active outdoors, just remember to protect yourself from sun damage
- Prevent sunburns, it hurts, looks bad and causes wrinkles
- Prevent premature wrinkles, dark tans = deep wrinkles
- Melanoma is the most common cancer for people in their teens and 20's.
- The UV rays from artificial tanning lights BLAST the skin with an unnatural amount of damaging



UV rays=unnatural color, ↑↑↑wrinkles and ↑↑skin cancer