

# SKIN SENSE

## “Clothes” Minded Tips For Summer Sun Fun

(NAPSA)—While summer’s lightweight fabrics are a welcome relief from winter’s dark and heavy garb, many fashion staples offer inadequate protection from the sun’s damaging rays.

A recent survey conducted by the American Academy of Dermatology found that almost two out of three people report that they always or often wear protective clothing when they are going to be outdoors for a long period of time, an encouraging sign that points to an increased awareness of the dangers of sun exposure.

The amount of sun protection a garment offers can vary widely. Understanding the differences in the amount of protection provided by a variety of styles and fabrics is the key to being “clothes” minded and safe in the sun.

“Not every form of clothing provides enough protection to prevent sunburn,” said dermatologist Susan H. Weinkle, M.D., assistant clinical professor of dermatology at the University of South Florida in Tampa, Fla. “Most of the summer clothes we have in our closets don’t get high marks for sun protection.”

Dr. Weinkle offers the following tips for selecting clothes that protect your skin from the sun:

- Look at the fabric’s weave.

Tightly woven fabrics prevent the sun’s rays from penetrating through to the skin better than loosely woven fabric.

- Choose dark colors over light colors. Dark colors increase a fabric’s sun protection factor (SPF). For example, a green cotton T-shirt has an SPF of 10 vs. seven for a white one.

- Select thick fabrics instead of



**A basic white cotton T-shirt provides only moderate protection from sunburn.**

thin ones. Thick fabrics block more of the sun’s rays from your skin.

- Look for fabrics that have been specially treated with ultra-violet (UV) absorbers like resins. These additives can substantially increase a fabric’s SPF.

- Wash your clothes in specialized laundry detergents that contain sun-protective ingredients.

- Choose clothing that fits and retains its shape. Stretched-out fabrics lose some of their sun protection because the fabric is thinner in some spots than others.

- Stay dry. Wet fabrics can lose up to 50 percent of their SPF and offer much less sun protection.

“Here in Florida, it’s common for parents to put a white T-shirt on their children to protect them from the sun while swimming,” Dr. Weinkle said. “What parents don’t realize is that when this T-shirt gets wet, it actually provides very little sun protection.”

For more information, visit [www.aad.org](http://www.aad.org) or contact the Academy toll-free at (888) 462-DERM.