



B BurrellesLuce

68 19180 29 XX OK

Safety on sunny days is a must for children

Picnics, soccer and baseball games, and trips to the beach are fun for our children and their families. The North Carolina Dermatology Association wants to make citizens aware of a campaign, Fun in the Sun- Be Smart, Be Safe, to help families become more aware of measures to take during activities in the sun. "Most people know that the sun can be dangerous, but many parents do not know the appropriate actions to protect their children from developing melanoma during their lifetime," states Adnan Nasir, MD, President of the North Carolina Dermatology Association and

North Carolina Medical Society member.

Previous studies have confirmed that sun exposure is responsible for the development of at least two-thirds of all melanomas, the most deadly form of skin cancer. Intermittent sun exposure, which is often recreational and frequently occurs daily for prolonged periods of time, is also closely linked to melanoma. It is estimated that 80 percent of a person's lifetime sun damage occurs before the age of 18. This combination of intense, intermittent sun exposure, which results in a sunburn,

See SUN, Page 3A

increases a child's risk for developing melanoma.

A recent survey showed that a child's sunburn was significantly associated with the sunburn of the parent or caregiver. Parents set a bad example for their children by not using sunscreen on themselves and not limiting their exposure during peak hours of the sun. Studies have shown that sunburn is often the result of incorrect use of sunscreen. Since people frequently apply only 20 percent of 50 percent of the recommended amount of sunscreen, they only receive 20 percent to 50 percent of the SPF protection. Underprotection due to inadequate application of sunscreen, coupled with overexposure to the sun, results in damaging sunburns.

Sunlight consists of two types of harmful rays- UVA rays and UVB rays. The UVB rays are the sun's burning rays (which are blocked by window glass) and are the primary cause of sunburn and skin cancer. UVA rays (which pass through window glass) penetrate deeper into the dermis, or base layer of the skin. They also contribute to sunburns and skin cancer. Both UVA and UVB rays can cause suppression of the immune system which helps to protect you against the development and spread of skin cancer.

In addition to wearing a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher, a comprehensive sun protection program includes avoiding deliberate tanning with indoor or

outdoor light, seeking shade, wearing protective clothing and limiting exposure during peak hours. "Early initiation of sun protection behaviors by parents and regular use throughout life may decrease a child's risk of developing melanoma," stated Dr. Nasir.

The American Academy of Dermatology recommends the following tips for effective sunscreen use:

- * Wear a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15.

- * Use sunscreen every day if you are going to be in the sun for more than 20 minutes.

- * Apply sunscreens to dry skin 15-30 minutes before going outdoors.

- * When applying sunscreens, pay particular attention to the face, ears, hands and arms, and generously coat the skin that is not covered by clothing.

- * One ounce of sunscreen, enough to fill a shot glass is considered the amount needed to cover the exposed areas of the body completely.

- * Reapply sunscreens every two hours or immediately after swimming or strenuous activities.

For best coverage, Dr. Nasir suggests two coats of sunscreen be applied prior to sun exposure. This reduces the number of bare spots and assures more even application. As sports and outdoor activities gear up this spring, the North Carolina Dermatology Association wants children and parents to have Fun in the Sun but Be Smart and Be Safe.