

## SUNSCREENS for children - a confusing subject

Since sunscreen is widely used and recommended by almost all of the authoritative skin organizations, it should be easy to choose a brand or type that you can use for your child. Unfortunately, this is not the case.

We actually suggest that you read the well-developed article in "Wikipedia" on sunscreen. No doubt you may find

it quite confusing and anyone who can commit it to memory should apply to be a contestant on jeopardy. Never-

theless, it gives insight as to why sunscreen should be used and how difficult it is to choose the right one.

As noted in the article, SPF depends on the needs of the individual person. In terms of the use of sunscreen on children, a few caveats will be helpful:

Babies absorb almost all substances more and faster through the skin than older children and adults. Long term studies on most substances used

on the skin of babies are few and far between. This is not to say that skin products should not be used on babies, but only in moderation since we

don't know what we may learn years from now. As far as use of sunscreen on small babies, it is better to keep them out of direct sunlight for any prolonged period of time. Use light clothing, shady areas, hats, etc. rather than sunscreen when practical.

Use sunscreen as directed on the label but try to cover only exposed areas rather than the whole body.

Periodically take the child out of direct sunlight when outdoors for a "sunlight time out".

Remember that the lighter skinned the person, the more important it is to be aware of overexposure.

Finally, have a wonderful summer, climate change notwithstanding.