



# Be Sun Savvy!

## Coaches Manual

**North Dakota  
Cancer Coalition**

*Planning for a cancer-free future.*

\*Some manual content was obtained from the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Norris Cotton Cancer Center.

\*Other sources include the Skin Cancer Foundation, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the North Dakota Comprehensive Cancer Prevention and Control Program

# Coaches Burning Role

As a coach, you work hard to prevent injury to your players. Ensuring they practice sun safe behaviors is another aspect of protecting your players from injury.

Coaches have a dual role of teaching children how to protect themselves from the sun while role modeling sun safe behavior themselves. Many people associate tan skin with health – the media promotes this idea by showing models and athletes with tans. In fact, a “tan” is the body’s signal that skin is injured. You can help your players learn that the lighter the “tan”, the healthier the skin. Promote the idea that being an athlete means taking care of yourself as much as working on your game.

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## **Make YOUR Sun Savvy Behaviors a Daily Habit**



Always apply sunscreen SPF 30 or above 30 minutes before practice or games. Reapply at least every two hours.



Wear a hat that protects your face, neck and ears.



Wear a shirt with sleeves (at least short-sleeved) and wear lightweight pants rather than shorts when possible.



Wear sunglasses.



Seek shade whenever possible or make your own with an umbrella (may choose colors to encourage school/team spirit).

Remember, kids don't always pay attention to what you say – it's more about what you do. The biggest impact on your players is to have them see someone they respect model a healthy behavior!

# Sun Safe Practices



Encourage players to come to practice and the games with sunscreen already applied. Make sure they are wearing a broad spectrum UVA/UVB of at least 30. Ask them to bring sunscreen in their sports bag.



At the beginning of practices and games, ask if they have applied sunscreen. If they have not, ask them to put it on before practice or the game.



If possible, ask your school/organization to provide sunscreen for the athletes that do not bring sunscreen. If this is not a possibility contact a local store/business for a sunscreen donation. Often times, stores/businesses are more than willing to do this in return for a little recognition (i.e. sticker on sunscreen thanking sponsor, sign thanking sponsor).



At all day tournaments, make sure they reapply sunscreen at least every 2 hours.



Encourage players to bring sunglasses to wear when they are sitting on the sidelines.



Encourage players to bring a hat to wear when they are sitting on the sidelines. The hat should protect the face, neck and ears.



When possible, ask players to play in an area protected from the sun. Especially at tournaments, encourage players to seek shade between games. This will help them conserve energy as well as protect them from the sun.



When possible, have the bus/vehicle traveled in to and from games available to players to escape the sun.

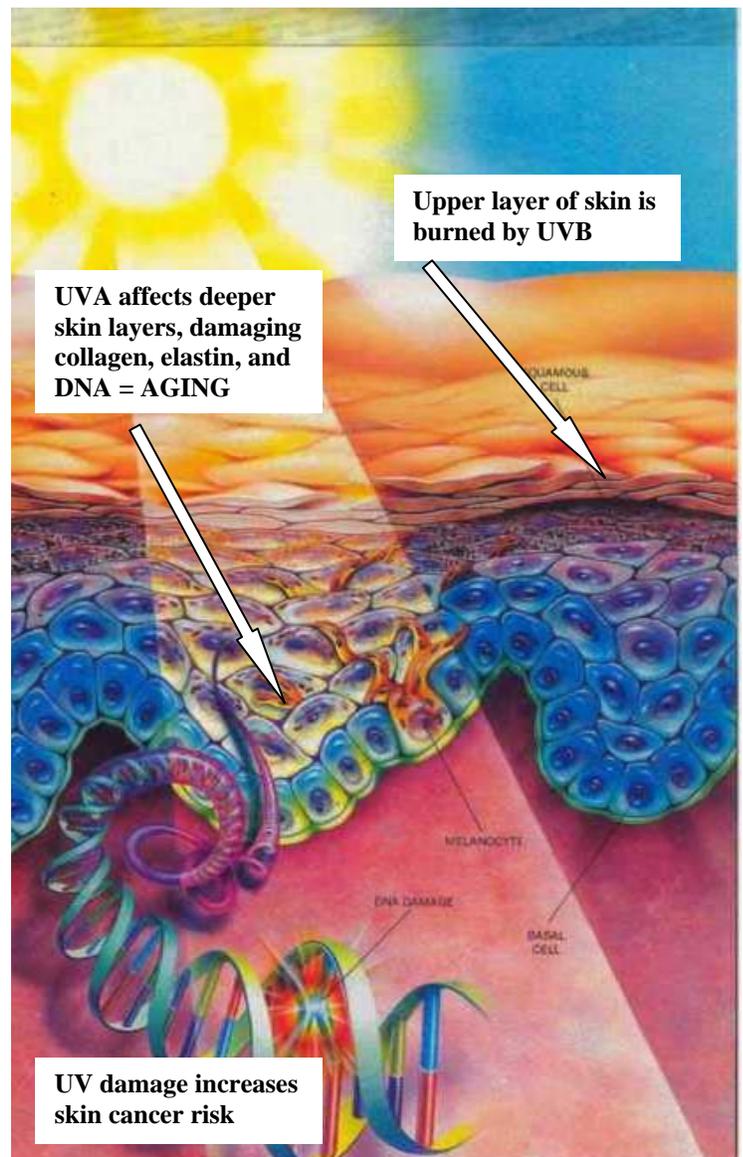
Make it a team goal to block the sun!

# Sunscreen Tips

Skin protection is an important defense against skin cancer. The body's usual defense against the sun's damaging ultraviolet rays is a pigment in the skin called melanin. Some individuals have more melanin. The melanin in light brown or tanned skin provides only as much defense as a sunscreen with an SPF of 4. The melanin in dark black skin provides only as much defense as a sunscreen with an SPF of 8. This means that even people with the darkest skin CAN get sunburns!

So, to protect your skin from the sun's harmful rays, always wear a UVA/UVB sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or greater on skin exposed to the sun.

- Always buy sunscreen with an SPF (Sun Protection Factor) of at least 30.
  - Look for sunscreen that provides protection against both UVA and UVB rays.
- Apply 30 minutes before going outside to give your sunscreen time to penetrate your skin and protect your cells.
  - Pay particular attention to lips, ears, back of neck and tops of feet.
- Reapply every 2 hours.
  - Sunscreens labeled as "sport, waterproof, water resistant" are not more effective and must also be reapplied.
- Remember to apply enough sunscreen to cover well. The ingredients do degrade over time so be sure the bottle of sunscreen is not more than a year old. Also, store sunscreen at room temperature.



# Sun Protection Facts

## Did you know...

- About 90 percent of non-melanoma skin cancers are associated with exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun.
- Just one blistering sunburn during childhood doubles the risk of skin cancer later in life.
- Regardless of skin color, EVERYONE who has excessive unprotected UV exposure is at risk to get skin cancer.
- Ultraviolet (UV) rays are the harmful rays from the sun that can damage our skin and eyes.
- Intensity of UV rays varies by season. It does NOT have to be hot for skin damage to occur.
- UV rays penetrate clouds and haze – although more slowly, skin burns occur on cloudy days.
- Excessive UV exposure can cause premature aging of the skin, cataracts, skin cancers, and immune system suppression. Wrinkles are from UV damage, any dermatologist or plastic surgeon will tell you most of the damage they see is from excessive UV rays.
- It may take only 10-15 minutes to burn during the sun's peak hours. The sun's peak hours are 10a.m. – 4p.m.
- Sunscreen contains chemicals that absorb ultraviolet rays.
- Sunblocks are zinc or titanium oxide that actually block UV rays.
- When you apply sunscreen to your skin it becomes an invisible protective layer, a shield – almost like the ozone layer around the earth.
- All sunscreen is made of chemicals that break down when exposed to the sun or water or sweat. Reapply it about every 2 hours.
- A tan does not protect your skin from getting burned. A dark tan gives about the same protection as sunscreen with an SPF of 4.
- Practicing sun safe behaviors during childhood is the first step in reducing the chances of getting skin cancer later in life.