

Skin Cancer Prevention



Skin cancer is the **most common type of cancer** in Ireland.



Over 11,000¹ cases are diagnosed each year, this number is projected to almost double by 2045².



Most skin cancers can be prevented.

Most people living in Ireland have fair skin, the type which burns easily and tans poorly, so are at high risk of UV damage and skin cancer.

Exposure to UV radiation during childhood is particularly harmful, so protecting skin during childhood is extremely important.

Protect your skin by following the SunSmart 5 S's



Slip on clothing: Cover skin as much as possible, wear long sleeves, collared t-shirts, clothes made from close-woven material that does not allow sunlight through.



Slop on broad-spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen: Apply sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30+ for adults and 50+ for children, which has high UVA protection, and is water resistant. Reapply regularly. No sunscreen can provide 100% protection, it should be used alongside other protective measures such as clothing and shade.



Slap on a wide brimmed hat: Protect your face, ears and neck.



Seek shade: Sit in cover of trees to avoid direct sunlight. Use a sunshade on your buggy or pram. Keep babies and children up to 1 year old out of direct sunlight.



Slide on sunglasses: Guard your eyes from harm by wearing sunglasses with UV protection.



Do not deliberately try to get a suntan. Avoid getting a sunburn. Never use a sunbed.



Know the UV index: The UV index shows how strong the sun's UV rays are. Protect your skin all year round but especially from St Patrick's Day when the UV index is 3 or above. You can find the UV index for your area on Met Éireann or the weather apps on your phone. Stay safe by limiting time in the sun when UV is strongest, typically between 11:00am-3:00pm.

1. National Cancer Registry Ireland (2024) Cancer in Ireland 1994-2022: Annual statistical report of the National Cancer Registry. NCRI, Cork, Ireland.

2. National Cancer Registry. Cancer incidence projections for Ireland 2020-2045. Cork: National Cancer Registry; 2019

Be SunSmart

www.hse.ie/sunsmart



