



# Sun, babies and toddlers

## The sun's radiation

- As well as the light you can see, the sun contains UV radiation which you can't see.
- The sun is strongest between the hours of 11am and 4pm during daylight saving months.
- UV radiation in this strong sunlight can burn a young child's delicate skin.
- UV radiation penetrates light cloud, so can burn just as badly on overcast days.
- Sunburn can also occur in the shade. This is because UV radiation is scattered in the atmosphere and is also reflected by concrete, water and sand.
- Dress your child in a broad-brimmed hat and close-woven clothing which covers the arms, shoulders and legs
- Beware of putting babies under light coverings/ umbrellas that may let sun through.

## Strong sunlight

- A child's skin can burn in a few minutes.
- This burning can cause damage which builds up over the years.
- This leads to premature ageing of the skin, and possibly skin cancer later.

## How much sun is safe?

- A small amount of gentle sunlight is good for growing children.
- Sunlight is gentle in the early morning and late afternoon during the summer months and at most times during winter.

## Cover up between 11am and 4pm

The sunburn danger time is between 11am and 4pm in the daylight saving months when the sunlight is strong. At this time try to:

- Keep your child out of strong sun as much possible. Indoors, or in the shade is best
- When outdoors drape a cloth over your baby's pram or play area

## What about sunscreen?

- A hat and clothing are the best sun protection.
- Be cautious about using sunscreen on babies under one year. (It's best to keep your baby out of strong sunlight).
- However, if there is a risk that your baby might be sunburned, use sunscreen on areas of skin not covered by clothing.
- If toddlers have to be in the sun, use sunscreen on uncovered skin.

## Which sunscreen is best?

- Use an SPF30+, broad spectrum sunscreen which complies to AS/NZS2604 sunscreen standard.
- Choose a sunscreen without fragrance to help avoid skin irritations.
- A young child may be allergic to sunscreen, so test it first on a small area of skin.
- A zinc stick is useful for your child's nose, cheeks and lips.
- Use water resistant sunscreen when your child is swimming or playing in water.

## Using sunscreen

- Follow the manufacturer's instructions.
- Re-apply the sunscreen every two hours, or more frequently if it is rubbed or washed off.

**Remember:** Your children depend on you to protect them from the sun.