

CANCER INSIGHT

FOR PHARMACY STAFF

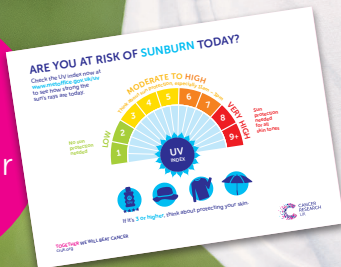
Summer 2018

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

SUN & SKIN CANCER

INSIDE:

A3 poster to display in your pharmacy



CANCER RESEARCH UK



86% of melanomas in the UK are caused by overexposure to UV

SUN SAFETY AND SKIN CANCER

There were around 15,400 new cases of melanoma skin cancer in the UK in 2014. Malignant melanoma mortality rates have almost tripled in the UK since the early 1970s.

Too much ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun (or sunbeds) is the main cause of skin cancer, including melanoma - the most serious form.

It's important that people protect themselves; getting sunburnt just once every two years can triple the risk of melanoma.

Almost 9 in 10 cases of melanoma could be prevented by enjoying the sun safely and avoiding sunburn and sunbeds.

We've pulled together some useful tips you can share with your patients to help them stay safe this summer, whether they're going abroad or staying in the UK.

THE VITAMIN D DEBATE

Although excessive UV exposure is the main cause of skin cancer, sunlight is also the main source of vitamin D so getting the balance right is key. There is still uncertainty about vitamin D, including what levels qualify as 'optimal' but here are a few things to keep in mind:



The amount of time you need in the sun to make enough vitamin D is different for each person and can depend on skin tone. Lighter skinned people can get sunburn and skin damage more quickly, but need less sun to get enough vitamin D.



It also depends on things like time of day, time of year, and where you are in the world. For most white people, just going about their normal daily activities is sufficient to produce the required vitamin D levels.



It's also important to keep in mind certain groups that might be more at risk of vitamin D deficiency, including people with darker skin and cultural groups who wear full body clothing. The government recommends that people in these groups should take a 10 mcg supplement of vitamin D a day.¹

Get more advice and guidance at [po.st/NICE](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-is-the-recommended-daily-intake-of-vitamin-d)



1 in 54

people will be diagnosed with melanoma during their lifetime.

STAYING SAFE IN THE SUN

Sunburn can easily catch people out, especially those who have fair skin, lots of moles or freckles, red or fair hair, or light coloured eyes. Here are some key messages to pass on to your patients:

1. KNOW HOW YOUR SKIN REACTS

Sunburn isn't always raw, peeling or blistering. If your skin has gone pink or red in the sun, it's sunburnt. And you can't always see the damage. For people with darker skin, it may just feel irritated, tender or itchy.

2. CHECK THE UV INDEX

The UV index tells you how strong the sun's rays are. Remind people that UV can be strong even on cloudy days. 90% of UV can pass through light cloud.

If it's 3 or higher, people need to think about protecting their skin (see the fold out inside this guide). Encourage patients to check www.metoffice.gov.uk/uv

3. TRY THE SHADOW RULE

If people don't have access to the UV index, they can use the shadow rule to work out when the sun is strong. If their shadow

is shorter than their height this means that the sun's UV rays are strong.

4. COMBINE SHADE, CLOTHING AND SUNSCREEN

When it comes to sun protection, sunscreen should be the last line of defence. Spending time in the shade, especially between 11am and 3pm in the UK, and covering up with clothing, sunglasses and a wide brim hat offer better protection.

Sunscreens should be at least SPF15 and 4 or more stars and should be reapplied regularly, even if it says 'once-a-day' on the label.

Advise patients not to stay in the sun longer than they would without sunscreen.

IMPORTANT TIP:

Higher SPFs don't offer much more protection and may lure people into a false sense of security, leading to more damage. A tan is a sign of damaged skin.

Sunscreen should be at least SPF15 and 4 or more stars

ORDER FREE RESOURCES FOR YOUR PHARMACY

We have a range of materials to help people stay safe in the sun, including our new 'Let's stay safe in the sun' leaflet and A3 posters emphasising the impact of the sun in the UK.

You can order these materials for your pharmacy, and browse many more, at

cruk.org/sunsmart2018



SIGN UP NOW AT:

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Our Cancer Insight newsletter provide you with best practice advice on important cancer-related topics, as well as the latest evidence, training materials, practical tools and patient resources

TOGETHER WE WILL BEAT CANCER

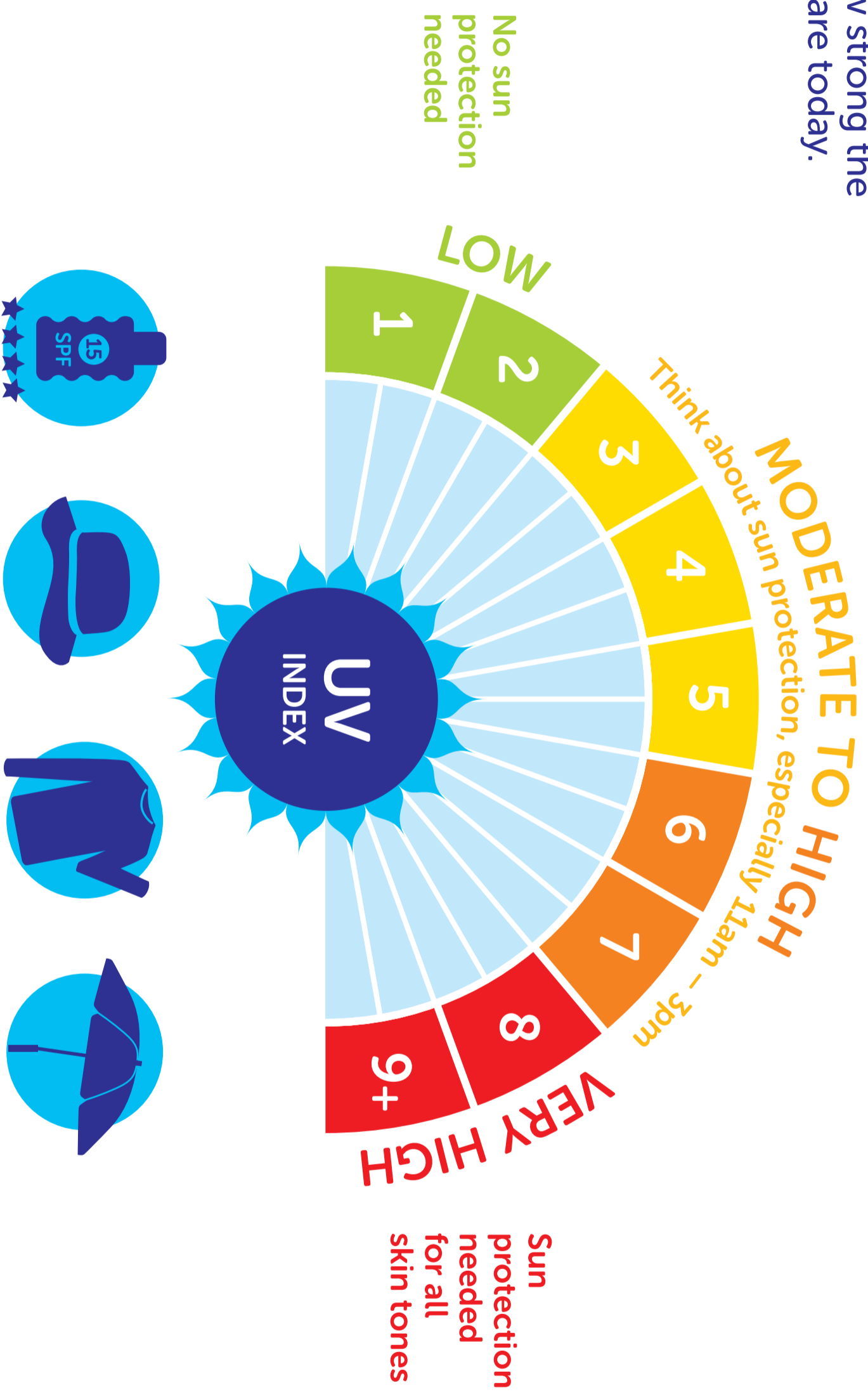
Cancer Research UK is a registered charity in England and Wales (1089464), Scotland (SC041666) and the Isle of Man (1103).



**CANCER
RESEARCH
UK**

ARE YOU AT RISK OF SUNBURN TODAY?

Check the UV index now at www.metoffice.gov.uk/uv to see how strong the sun's rays are today.



If it's 3 or higher, think about protecting your skin.

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