

Doctors say sun risks outweigh benefits

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Dermatologists are concerned that the debate over the health risks and benefits of sun exposure has many people confused.

USA Today says doctors fear that new studies suggesting that vitamin D from modest sun exposure can reduce the risk of some cancers, combined with a class-action lawsuit that says sunscreens don't work as well as labeling suggest, may have some people heading to the beach wearing baby oil or hiding in the nearest cave until fall.

"A little bit of sun may be OK," says Stephen Stone, a dermatologist in Springfield, Ill., and president of the American Academy of Dermatology. While it is possible that vitamin D has great benefits, extensive, unprotected sun exposure remains a major cause of skin cancer and most of the wrinkling and spotting that come with age, Stone told the newspaper.

Dermatologists say adequate vitamin D can be obtained more safely from foods such as fortified milk and salmon, as well as supplements.

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