

## Some sunscreens highly rated by consumers don't adhere to AAD guidelines

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While consumers give high marks to some sunscreens, many of those products do not meet American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) guidelines, according to an article published online by *JAMA Dermatology*.

Using sunscreen is a modifiable behavior that can help to reduce the risk for skin cancers. Still, sunscreen use is low for adolescents and adults. Consumer preferences and recommendations may help to drive sunscreen use but this has not been well investigated. Understanding these factors could help [health care professionals](#) learn about patient considerations regarding sunscreens and possibly increase their use.

Shuai Xu, M.D., M.Sc., of Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, Chicago, and coauthors searched for "sunscreens" on Amazon.com. They selected the top 1 percentile of sunscreen products on the internet retailer as of December 2015 according to average consumer review (greater than or equal to four stars) and the highest number of consumer reviews.

There were 6,500 products categorized as "sunscreens" so the top 65 products were selected for analysis. Their [median price](#) was \$3.32 an ounce; median SPF was 35; creams were most common; 92 percent had broad-spectrum coverage claims and 62 percent were labeled as water or sweat resistant.

Of the highest rated sunscreen products on Amazon.com, 40 percent (26

of 65) did not adhere to AAD criteria (SPF greater than or equal to 30, broad-spectrum claim, and water and/or sweat resistance) and most of that was because they lacked water/sweat resistance, according to the results.

Consumers primarily preferred [sunscreens](#) based on cosmetic elegance (skin sensation on application, color or scent), followed by product performance and compatibility with skin type.

Study limitations include limited generalizability because of the lack of demographic information on the consumer reviewers.

"Dermatologists should counsel patients that sunscreen products come with numerous marketing claims and varying cosmetic applicability, all of which must be balanced with adequate photoprotection," the study concludes.

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