

A baby's skin no match for the sun

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(HealthDay)—Want to help protect your children from skin cancer as they get older? Make sure they never get a serious sunburn in childhood.

Just one blistering burn as a child or teen nearly doubles the risk of getting melanoma, according to the American Academy of Dermatology.

"Sun protection is important at every stage of life, including infancy. Sun exposure is the most preventable risk factor for [skin cancer](#), including melanoma," said pediatric dermatologist Sheila Fallon Friedlander. She's a professor of pediatrics and dermatology at the University of California, San Diego.

"Keep sun-safety items near the front door, in your car and in your diaper bag so that you always have them ready when you're on the go," Fallon Friedlander recommended in an American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) news release.

Other tips from Fallon Friedlander and the AAD include:

- Dress your baby in sun-protective clothing, such as lightweight, long-sleeved shirts and pants, as well as a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses with UV protection.
- Try to keep your baby in the shade. If you can't find shade, create your own using an umbrella, canopy or stroller hood.
- Avoid using sunscreen on children younger than 6 months old if possible, but use a minimal amount if needed. It should be a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30. Sunscreens with titanium dioxide or zinc oxide are less likely to irritate a baby's sensitive skin. Reapply every two hours or immediately after swimming or sweating.

Along with [sun protection](#), keep [babies](#) safe on hot days by making sure they don't get overheated and that they drink plenty of fluids, Fallon Friedlander advised.

If your baby gets fussy, cries excessively or develops redness on any

exposed [skin](#), take him or her indoors immediately.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [sun safety for children](#).

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