

Protect your baby from the sun's harmful UV rays

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Summer's here and the Mayo Clinic says babies need protection from

the sun's damaging UV rays, too.

It only takes one severe sunburn during childhood or adolescence to nearly double the risk for a deadly melanoma later in life, according to the American Academy of Dermatology Association.

Babies are far more vulnerable to sunburn than older kids, so it's essential to protect them against UV rays, said pediatric dermatologist [Dr. Megha Tollefson](#), who offers tips for keeping [babies](#) safe outdoors.

"Sunburns can be very painful," she said, adding that severe sunburn can be a setup for infection.

Sunburns are usually short-term concerns, but they pose long-term risks, too.

"The more UV exposure a child gets—especially the younger in life that it starts—and the more sunburns they have, the higher their risk for [skin cancer](#) later in life," said Tollefson, who practices in Rochester, Minn.

Protecting yourself from the sun during the first 20 years of life is crucial for guarding against the long-term risk of skin cancer.

For infants, avoid peak sun hours from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. If that's not possible, cover the baby with shade or long-sleeved clothing and a hat.

Tollefson also recommends using sunscreen on areas of exposed skin.

"We would recommend that, at that age, parents use the sunscreens that have physical blockers rather than chemical blockers because they're better for sensitive skin," she said in a Mayo Clinic news release.

Look for [titanium dioxide](#) and zinc oxide when selecting a sunscreen for

a baby and reapply it every two hours or right after swimming or sweating.

More information: For more on protecting your baby from the sun, head to the [Skin Cancer Foundation](#).

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