

ASHBY ADVISOR

Forty-seventh edition
April 2010

Now that we are starting to get back outdoors more, I thought we should look at sunscreen's and their safety.

FIRST: Skin cancers are on the rise.

SECOND: Too much exposure to the sun will cause skin damage.

THIRD: Most sunscreens contain ingredients that have been linked as hormone disrupters and powerful free radicals in the body. Things we don't want.

FOURTH: The stuff we rub on our skin can accumulate in the fat and organs in our body. So why rub free radicals and hormone disrupters on our skin?

Some great research out there questions whether the most popular sunscreens are more helpful or harmful.

There are two basic sunscreen types:

- Physical blocking agents – zinc oxide and titanium dioxide.
- Chemical blocking agents – such as octinoxate, oxybenzone, homosalate or octisalate (this is not a full list).

BOTTOM LINE: The safest sunscreen is the physical blocking agents with all natural organic ingredients. The chemical sunscreen on the other hand appears to be more likely linked to causing as much damage as they appear to prevent. (Sunscreens prevent sunburn, but there is not a lot of research that shows they prevent skin cancer.)

The website for the Environmental Working Group, (<http://www.ewg.org>) a non profit based in Washington DC is a great source for sunscreens. They rated over 1700 sunscreen products on their site. They are listed from the best to the worst with a 0 of 10 being the **best** and 10 of 10 being the **worst**. They also have a huge list of cosmetics, cleansers, etc, that they rate also.

Quote of the month: “What sunshine is to flowers, smiles are to humanity.”