

# ASKtheEXPERT



## Healthy Skin

with Dr. William Griffin

### **Sunbathing is Cosmetic Suicide**

Professional models and their managers have figured out that tanning is not a good career move. Why? Because the more you tan, the quicker you age. Want to look 20 at 30? Just avoid suntan parlors and sunbathing.

But be especially careful not to sunburn. Every sunburn increases your lifetime chances of getting skin cancer, especially melanoma. This is especially true in children under 10 years of age. Did you know most sun damage is done before 18 years of age? In fact, most people get 80% of their lifetime sun before they are 18 years old. So Slip, Slap and Slop. That is, slip on a shirt, slap on a hat (not a cap) and slop on sunscreen.

What type of sunscreen? It should have a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or better and protect you from UVA and UVB light. Slop on a generous amount and reapply after being outside a couple of hours.

But you have to have a tan for the prom? Well, get one – out of a bottle, or better yet, get sprayed on with the new instant tanning sprayers. Quick and safe.

Everyday our office treats the consequences of sunbathing which include discoloration of skin, fine blood vessels of face, sun spots, wrinkles and skin cancers including melanoma. The wrinkles are annoying. The melanoma can be fatal.

And what if you do sunburn? The best medicine is aspirin or NSAID's such as Aleve, ibuprofen, etc., and applying a moisturizing lotion supplemented by cool soaks or baths.

So be smart today and look good tomorrow.