**CAP health & wellness:** HSO Briefing on Sunburn

**Purpose:**

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| (U) **Bottom Line:**   * Risk to populations**: very low** **| low** | **moderate** | **high** * **Risk varies with latitude, time of year, and race.** |

**Overview:**

Enjoying leisure activities outside in the summer can be fun. The energy radiating from the sun makes it possible

Overdoing it and failure to protect yourself can result in painful sunburn and increased risk of skin cancer.

Who is at risk for sunburn?

* Higher risk for individuals with pale skin
* Blue eyes
* Red or blonde hair
* Certain medications increase the risk for sunburn:
  + Ciproflaxin
  + Tetracyclines
  + Sulfa drugs
  + Some antidepressants
  + Some blood pressure medications
  + Some diuretics
  + Saint John's Wart

What happens?

* Skin gets red in 3-5 hours
* Peaks in 12-24 hours
* Resolves in 3-7 days
* Tan develops in about 5 days
* If blisters form
  + Break the blisters and gently wash with soap and water
  + Apply an over the counter antibiotic ointment

Over the counter Non-steroidal medication (ibuprofen, naproxen) may be useful for pain

Prevention of sunburn

* Use a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30
* Reapply if it is washed off in the water or by sweating
* Avoid sunning during peak time 12-2:00
* Wear a hat
* Around the water consider the enhanced effect of radiation from the water
* Wear sunglasses

Risks of repeated sunburn

* Precancerous lesions
* Skin cancers
  + Basal cell carcinoma
  + Squamous cell carcinoma
  + Malignant melanoma

***Recommendations:***

Use common sense when outside in the summer

Use effective sunscreen

Reapply sunscreen frequently

Have your doctor check you for skin cancer at annual physical

***Recommendations:***

**Questions**: **Contact your Region/Wing/Unit Health Services Officer or**

Lt Col Thomas Janisko, CAP

Chief, Health Services

202-761-0348 / Thomas.Janisko@usace.army.mil