

Katie Johnson:

Good morning and welcome to Apple A Day, Lake Region Healthcare's health and wellness show where we feature news and information you can use to live a healthier life. I'm Katie Johnson, your host, and my guest today is Dr. Allison Goddard. She is a dermatologist with us here at Lake Region Healthcare and she's here to talk about summer skin care with us. Good morning, Dr. Goddard.

Dr. Allison Goddard:

Good morning. Thank you for having me.

Katie Johnson:

May is Melanoma Awareness Month and we actually just marked Melanoma Monday on May 2nd...the first Monday in May, and truly the whole month is set aside to draw special attention preventing Melanoma. It's called the "most serious skin cancer" because it can spread to other parts of the body. But it's highly treatable when detected early and it's very preventable – so today I'd like to talk with you about some of the ways we can prevent this most serious skin cancer. And it's likely that May was chosen for this awareness month because we're headed right into the months we spend the most time in the sun. Most melanoma cases are attributable to UV exposure, so the number one prevention tip is reducing that ultraviolet light exposure. Let's start with sunscreen. So Dr. Goddard, what are your tips for picking out a good sunscreen, or the right sunscreen?

Dr. Allison Goddard:

I think for most dermatologists our number one rule is finding a sunscreen that you will wear again and again. If you buy a sunscreen that is too sticky or heavy and you just don't like the way that it feels on your body or that causes irritation, you're not going to use it. And so the most effective sunscreen ... It does have to do with the number on the bottle, the SPF, but also that you're going to wear it and wear enough of it that it can do its job.

Katie Johnson:

Absolutely. With that in mind, how often should you be applying it and how should you apply it? Are there kinds, spray versus lotion, pros and cons to those different types of sunscreens too?

Dr. Allison Goddard:

Yeah. The technology has really improved with sunscreens. They all used to be white and heavy and greasy. I think if those are the ones that you used years ago, then I understand why you don't want to use them. Now there are gels that can be applied as clear. Sunscreens that can go in hair-bearing areas where sometimes creams would just be way too messy. We all know about the sprays because often parents love those for the kids that are running around and just don't want to sit still for applying a cream. There are sticks that are great to use like around the face where you don't want to be spraying sunscreen so close to where you could breathe it in. Sometimes people feel like the heavier creams when they sweat, can run into their eyes and burn or sting. So look out for those sticks. They look like a deodorant stick but they go on very nicely and can be very effective.

Katie Johnson:

Absolutely. Is a higher SPF number ... For one thing, does it really mean anything? Once you get past a certain number is it really that much more effective? And particularly for the face. I see a lot of sunscreens marketed as facial sunscreens with a much higher number. Is that important?

Dr. Allison Goddard:

For me the thing with this face sunscreens, it's not about the higher number. I think you can put that high number SPF anywhere on your body. But the difference with the face sunscreens is they're less comedogenic, which means that they're less likely to clog your pores and cause acne. They're often more lightweight. They're lacking the ingredients that tend to clog our pores or cause breakouts and they're a little more lightweight.

Katie Johnson:

Sure.

Dr. Allison Goddard:

My favorite facial sunscreens also have a tint in them. I like it because it helps even my skin tone, but also the tint in that is made from something called iron oxide and the iron oxide will block rays of visible light. Blue light that you hear a lot about with your screens, from your computer, from your phone, but also just the light indoors. That light cannot cause sunscreen we don't think, but it can lead to premature aging and can worsen brown spots on the face such as melasma.

Katie Johnson:

The recommendation would be to wear that all the time, whether you're going to be outside or not.

Dr. Allison Goddard:

Right. Because all year round we get some sun exposure on our face. If you have pigment issues, you have brown spots or melasma that you don't like or you're just wanting to make sure you keep your skin in good shape for preventative aging reasons, having a facial sunscreen with an iron oxide with a slight tint to it can be a great all-year-round product.

Katie Johnson:

Does sunscreen ever expire? Does it go bad?

Dr. Allison Goddard:

Sunscreen does expire. The FDA requires sunscreens to remain stable at their strength for three years. Some sunscreens will have an expiration date on them. Sometimes they won't. Ideally you're going through the whole bottle within a year. We're wanting you to use all of it. But if you have a sunscreen for more than three years and it doesn't have an expiration, I would throw it out. If you see that it has an expiration date and it's passed, I would go ahead and throw it out. It's not going to harm you but it's not going to be as effective. Just like with so many other medications and supplements, when they pass their expiration date they just start to lose their efficacy.

Katie Johnson:

Sure. What else would you like us to know about sun skin care, summer skin care?

Dr. Allison Goddard:

Well, I think this time of year or maybe last month, is a really important time to start thinking about sunscreen. I've seen so many sunburns already because when it's cooler outside, you're out enjoying the sun. You've made it past winter and you don't think that you're getting a sunburn because you're not overly hot. You get those kind of sneaky sunburns. They all add up and they can all contribute to skin cancer. So being careful at those bridge times, those bridge seasons, spring and fall and not forgetting the sunscreen.

And then beyond sunscreen, there's so much out there for protective clothing. The protective clothing with something called UPF, which is kind of similar to SPF, but is a rating for the amount of protection from UV rays, has gotten more stylish and flattering and it's no longer kind of just big, bulky, heavy clothes. They're often so lightweight. They have technology that can help you stay cool even though you're wearing long sleeves or hats. That way you don't have to worry if your sunscreen has worn off, if you sweated it off, if you've missed a spot, because you have this physical barrier to protect you from the sun.

Katie Johnson:

Right. And that can be a really good option for kids, too. Kids that are squirmy and don't like to put sunscreen on. If you can get some good UPF clothing for the kids, might be more apt to protect them better as well.

Dr. Allison Goddard:

Right. You see a lot of kids with these rash guards on and if they start those good sun protection behaviors at a young age, then they're going to continue them throughout their life. It's harder to start habits like that when you're older. I think it's just such a great thing of how many kids I see with little sun hats and rash guards on. They're super cute and you don't have to worry as a parent so much that they're going to get a bad sunburn.

Katie Johnson:

Yeah, exactly. Shifting to premature skin aging and what that sun damage does to our skin, do you offer any products or procedures here that address that for people?

Dr. Allison Goddard:

We do not yet, but I have been working at this for the past two months kind of curating skin care products that I find will be the best for our community with the new technology and just products that people are really going to like. I'm putting together a list of different products that can protect your face all day and can help reverse some aging at night. Then we're working on obtaining lasers for different reasons, like red spots and brown spots on the face, kind of rejuvenating the skin as well as other procedures such as Botox you've heard about, fillers.

Katie Johnson:

I am so excited that these laser services are available here now and encourage people to call or visit the website to learn more about those.

Are there some warning signs we should watch for when it comes to our skin related to skin cancer and when we should call or seek medical attention when we see certain warning signs?

Dr. Allison Goddard:

Sure. I think the most common types of skin cancer don't get as much media press. Basal cell carcinoma and squamous cell carcinoma, you don't hear about as much as melanoma. We hear about melanoma because it is the more deadly type of skin cancer and so we really want to bring about awareness of that. Melanoma is a skin cancer that's derived from skin melanocytes which are what make up the moles, so those brown spots on your skin. But melanoma can arise in a preexisting mole, a mole you've had on your skin for years but all of a sudden starts to change. Or, two thirds of the time actually it comes from a brand new spot. So if you're an adult and you see a new mole, particularly if it doesn't look similar to your other moles, there's something about it looks different, make sure you make an appointment right away to have that evaluated.

Dr. Allison Goddard:

For the other skin cancers I just talked about, basal cell and squamous cell, they often start out just like a pimple that's not healing in an appropriate amount of time or red, kind of scaly or sore spot that again, is just not going away and not healing. When I say that as far as time frame, it could even last for a couple of weeks. But if you have a new red spot that is not going away after a month or two months and certainly if it's increasing in size, then that's something you want to call and try to get in right away.

Katie Johnson:

And of course that highlights the importance of regular self-checks for anything that might be changing or looking troublesome on your skin. I should mention the American Academy of Dermatology has some great resources in their How to SPOT Skin Cancer™ section of their website. These include infographics, videos and other downloads including a mole map for recording your self skin exam results. These are all available at www.aad.org. There are even [free posters](#), flyers and videos to use in classrooms, HR departments or other group settings.

Anything else you'd like to share with our listeners about keeping their skin healthy this summer before we wrap up?

Dr. Allison Goddard:

I don't think so. I think we've covered about everything. Just keep it safe. Take good care of your skin. It's the only skin you're going to have.

Katie Johnson:

That's right.

Dr. Allison Goddard:

We all want to go out there and have fun on the lakes and really enjoy the summer. We just want you to be safe and we'll be here for you if anything comes up you're concerned about.

Katie Johnson:

Absolutely. Dr. Allison Goddard board certified dermatologist here at Lake Region Healthcare, my guest today, during May, Melanoma Awareness month with some tips for spotting skin cancer, preventing skin cancer, when to seek some help and most of all with some encouragement to enjoy summer but to be

safe and protect that skin. Dr. Goddard and Katie Johnson on Apple A Day reminding we are here for you always, at Lake Region Healthcare. Have a great day.