

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:

Well, thanks so much for joining me again. We had you on when you first joined our team about six months or so ago, but in case some of our listeners might've missed that introduction, why don't we start by just reintroducing you to our listeners and tell them a little bit about your background before joining us at Lake Region Healthcare and what your experiences so far have been?

Dr. Allison Goddard:

Sure. As Katie said, I'm a board certified dermatologist. I am new to Minnesota. I moved here from Colorado where I've lived a few times in my life. I did my dermatology training in Chicago as well as Boston. Have lived in Tennessee, moved back to Colorado and now here.

Katie Johnson:

And what do you think of Minnesota so far?

Dr. Allison Goddard:

Yeah, it has been extreme weather.

Katie Johnson:

Yeah.

Dr. Allison Goddard:

I did survive my first winter here so I feel confident that I can make it going forward. We have had a beautiful spring and now we're in a bit of a heatwave.

Katie Johnson:

Yeah. This topic came to mind because summer hit us hard and fast and we all know that summer presents its own challenges in taking good care of our skin. A lot of summer skin care talk seems to center around sun protection and I definitely want to spend some time there, but the first question I have is about a different summertime issue and that's poison ivy, poison oak, poison sumac, those things that irritate our skin and leave us with itchy rashes, uncomfortable skin reactions. What should you do if you think you have touched one of those plants? What's your first line of action when that happens?

Dr. Allison Goddard:

Hmm. That's a great question. Unfortunately a lot of times we don't realize that we have touched it until we get the rash and we don't get the rash for often several days after the exposure. But if you have a keen eye, you know what to look for and you believe that you've been in contact with the plant, the best thing to do would be use good old soap and water. Ideally within an hour of contact with the plant you have a reduced chance of getting the actual rash if you're allergic to the plant. You also not only need to wash your body but you need to wash the clothing or anything else that might've come in contact with the plant.

Dr. Allison Goddard:

The plant contains an oil. That's what gets on your skin and on your clothing that then eventually causes an allergic reaction. If you go home and take a shower and really soap up and get that oil off, that's great. But if you had some shorts or shirt or whatever on with you and then you go to touch those items again and they still have the oil present, you can still unfortunately end up with this terribly itchy rash.

Katie Johnson:

And they are terribly itchy. I speak from experience. So what are your tips for treating at home and relieving that itch and knowing when maybe you might need to seek medical attention?

Dr. Allison Goddard:

Yeah. I think the severity is the most important when you need to seek medical attention. Sometimes the plant only came in contact with a very small portion of your skin so the rash is very localized. It's itchy and annoying but it's not keeping you from doing your everyday activities. It's not keeping you from sleeping. Those times you can use over-the-counter hydrocortisones. You can use calamine lotion for itch, take anti-histamines such as Benadryl.

Dr. Allison Goddard:

If a good portion of your skin is covered with rash (arms, legs, trunk), you're having problems sleeping, you're at risk for scratching your skin open and getting an infection, you should probably see your primary care physician or come see a board certified dermatologist. Things that we can do for you are a higher potency of that cortisone, much more effective for an allergic contact dermatitis which is what poison ivy and poison oak are. Sometimes people need to take steroids by mouth to just really shut down that allergic reaction to try to get some relief.

Katie Johnson:

You mentioned if you're allergic to the plant. Are there people that react more severely or don't react at all?

Dr. Allison Goddard:

Yes, absolutely. I'm one of those lucky ones that I can run through a field of poison ivy and nothing happens to me, but that can change at any time. You can develop allergies any time in life so it doesn't mean you should volunteer to trim everyone's yard and bushes that might have poisonous plants in there. For those who are allergic, like with any kind of allergic reaction, the reaction can get worse each time you're exposed. If you know that you had a rash from one of these plants in the past, you really do want to try to avoid repeat exposure because that rash can get worse and worse each time as your

immune system just becomes more and more aware that it doesn't want to be in contact with this particular item.

Katie Johnson:

Interesting. Well, thanks for your insights on that summer skin problem. We also know that spending time outdoors without protecting your skin from the sun's UV rays can damage your skin and that can both add years to how you look and also increase your chances of skin cancer, both things we want to avoid. I've heard it said that sunscreen is the most important skin care product that you can use. I don't know if you agree with that. It helps obviously prevent the sunburn, skin cancer and premature skin aging, wrinkles, sunspots, aging spots. So if that's the case, picking out a good sunscreen is really important. What are your tips for choosing 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, prior to this week, 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.

Dr. Allison Goddard:

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. We're working on all of that just to make sure that we can offer the services for our community. And if people are seeking those, they don't need to travel to Fargo or Alexandria. So keep an ear out for that. I'm sure we'll be letting you all know once we have all of those available for you.

Katie Johnson:

Yeah. That's really exciting news to hear and we will definitely want to get you back on the show and talk about that more once those products and services are available. 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:

Hm. Good advice. Good advice. 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, with great tips for keeping our skin healthy this summer. Dr. Goddard and Katie Johnson on Apple A Day reminding you there is so much to do here. Stay healthy for it. Have a great day.