

MEDIA RELEASE



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Not too cool to burn

With a cool, overcast summer it is easy to forget to sun safety, but just because the sun isn't shining, it doesn't mean it isn't burning.

Cancer Council Tasmania health promotion coordinator Kay Gunn said many Tasmanians didn't realise the risk of sunburn could be as high on a mild cloudy day as a hot sunny one.

"Many people mistakenly blame their pink faces on windburn, but windburn is caused by very cold conditions, strong winds and low humidity such as on ski slopes or in Antarctica. It is actually very rare in Tasmania," she said.

"Temperature is not a reliable indicator of when to use sun protection because sunburn is caused by UV radiation, which is a real problem in places like Tasmania where the weather is so changeable.

"The sun's infra-red rays cause the temperature to rise and are not related to UV radiation levels. When the temperature is cool, it means less intense infra-red rays but not necessarily less UV radiation.

"Without protection, UV radiation immediately starts to penetrate deep into the skin's layers. The top layers of skin release chemicals causing inflammation, pain and redness."

Ms Gunn said sunburn is not only painful but over-exposure to UV radiation could, and often did, lead to skin cancer.

"Our children are at greater risk of developing skin cancer in later years because their skin burns more easily and because the harmful effects of sunburn mount up time after time," she warned.

Cancer Council Tasmania recommends Tasmanians take particular care during the hours of 10am and 3pm between September and April when UV radiation levels are at their highest.

Check the daily UV forecast in your local newspaper or at the Bureau of Meteorology website www.bom.gov.au/products/UV/Launceston_TAS.shtml

Those in the sun should remember to:

- Slip on sun protective clothing
- Slop on broad spectrum, water resistant SPF30+ sunscreen

- Slap on a broad brimmed hat that protects your face, head, neck and ears
- Seek some shade
- Slide on some wrap around sunglasses

For comment or more information contact Cancer Council Tasmania health promotions coordinator Kay Gunn on 0408 514 030 or 6233 2123.

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