Sun savvy

Show your lips some love

Most of us know how important it is to protect our skin from the sun, but did you know your lips are especially vulnerable to the sun's harmful rays? Lips have almost no melanin – the protective pigment in our skin – so it's up to you to keep your lips properly protected.

Walking your dog, sitting in front of a sunny window and days spent at the beach can all have damaging effects, like wrinkling as well as skin cancer. To help keep harmful rays at bay, make sure to choose a lip balm with an SPF of 15 or higher and reapply regularly, at least every two hours. Stay away from petroleum jelly and high-shine lip gloss, as these actually attract the the sun to your lips.

In addition to a good lip balm, always wear sunscreen – even on cloudy days – and drink plenty of fluids to keep your lips and skin protected, hydrated and healthy.

Sources: Skin Cancer Foundation

Protect your teeth and gums

There are many easy and effective ways to protect your teeth and gums, like brushing and flossing regularly, using a fluorinated toothpaste, and eating wisely – making sure to avoid too many sugary and starchy foods. Avoiding tobacco is highly recommended, as tobacco is the primary cause of all oral cancers. And make sure to visit the dentist regularly. Check ups can detect early signs of oral health issues and professional cleanings are important for preventing oral problems before they begin.

Source: ADHA, CDC

Oral cancer: What you need to know

Oral cancer can form in any part of the mouth or throat and is particularly dangerous, since it can go unnoticed in its early stages. Anyone can get oral cancer, but there are things you can do to reduce your risk.

Make sure to avoid tobacco, limit alcohol and keep your lips protected in the sun. Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables and visit your dentist regularly to improve oral health and stay safe.

Source: Oral Cancer Foundation, May Clinic, Medline Plus

Trivia time:

What's so special about your tongue?

Answer: Just like a finger, it's got its own unique print!

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