Are you going to be exploring outside, swimming or playing sports this summer? If you’re out in the hot summer sun, it’s important to protect your skin from sunburn.

What is UV light?

UV rays reach the surface of the Earth, but only UV A and UVB rays can reach your skin. UV rays can burn your skin when they are strong and powerful.

In the world, the ozone layer has become thinner. Sunlight can reach us on Earth.

The Earth has a protective layer of gas called ozone surrounding it. It acts like a screen to help shield us from the sun’s damaging rays by absorbing and filtering them before they reach the surface of the planet.

But the ozone layer has been damaged by some chemicals that have been released into the air over many years. In some parts of the world, the ozone layer has become thinner. Beginning in the 1980s, many of the world’s governments agreed to limit the use of chemicals that hurt the ozone layer. The Environmental Protection Agency predicts that the ozone layer will be completely recovered by 2065.

But remember, the sun’s damaging rays still reach us on Earth.

Staying safe

People who need to be extra-careful about sun exposure are those who have:

- pale skin
- blond, red or light brown hair
- a family member who has had skin cancer.

But skin protection is important for everyone. The EPA advises people to:

- Limit time in the sun, especially between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
- Wear clothing that covers the skin — long-sleeved shirts, pants and broad-brimmed hats.
- Reapply sunscreen at least every two hours.

Cook’s Corner

Cinnamon Graham Treats

**You’ll need:**

- 10 to 12 whole cinnamon graham crackers (1 sleeve from box)
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup brown sugar

What to do:

2. In a saucepan, combine sugar, cinnamon and pecans. Cook over medium heat, stirring often, until a golden brown. Stir in the graham crackers. Pour sticky mixture evenly over graham crackers.

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Eco Note

Intense winter storms this year have caused hundreds of starving guillemot seabirds to fall dead onto France’s Atlantic beaches. Environmental advocates say the tough conditions prevented about 500 of the 80,000 birds from feeding, leaving them exhausted before falling to the beaches and dying. A member of Sea Shepherd France says such deaths happen each winter, but not on the scale of recent weeks. “Climate change is an indirect cause as it increases the frequency and intensity of storms,” said French National Center for Scientific Research scientist Jerome Fort.

For later:

Look in your newspaper for ads for sunscreen and other summer necessities.

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