

**To Your Health!**

By Judy Hargis, P.A



**THE JOYS AND RISKS OF THE SUN**

**What you need to know**

Most of us love the sun. When the sun comes out on a clear day, we think of things like fun-filled days at the swimming pool or the beach, playing outside and getting a great tan. What could be better! The sun contributes to our health. It is our main source of vitamin D, which is made in our skin when we spend time outdoors. The sun can also be problematic. It can cause aging, skin damage and, worst-case scenario, skin cancer. It is important to enjoy the outdoors but be aware of the risks of sun exposure and understand how to protect ourselves, and our families from its harmful rays. One way to do that is by using sunscreen.

Sunscreens are made up of several ingredients that help prevent the sun's harmful ultraviolet (UV) radiation from reaching the skin. There are two types of UV radiation, UVA and UVB. They both damage skin and can increase the risk of skin cancer. Sunscreens were developed to help protect our skin from UV radiation, but vary in their ability to protect against them. Exposure to both UVA and UVB radiation is harmful. UVB radiation penetrates the skin more deeply leading to wrinkling, skin leathering and sagging, and photo aging, in addition to skin cancer.

Sun protection factor (SPF) measures the sunscreen's ability to prevent UVB from damag-

ing skin. It takes approximately 20 minutes for unprotected skin to start to turn red. SPF 15 sunscreen prevents reddening 15 times longer, about 5 hours. There are a lot of sunscreen SPF strengths available, but most sunscreens with SPF of 15 or higher do a great job of protecting against UVB. Broad spectrum sunscreens protect against both UVA and UVB radiation.

Recommendations for sun exposure protection include: infants under six months should be kept in the shade and wear protective clothing when outdoors. Anyone over six months should use sunscreen daily. When using sunscreen you should apply about 1 ounce – about a shot glass full – to your body. If you plan on a long day at the beach, you should apply 1/4 to 1/2 bottle. Sunscreen should be applied at least 30 minutes before sun exposure, to give it a chance to work effectively. Sunscreen needs to be reapplied every two hours and immediately after swimming, toweling off or excessive sweating. Be aware that it is possible to get indoor UVA exposure, especially if you work near a window. Windows filter UVB rays but not UVA. When purchasing sunscreen, look for the Skin Cancer Foundation seal of recommendation.

Other recommendations include avoiding the sun, especially between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Avoid tanning and tanning booths. Use broad spectrum SPF of 15 or higher every day. When outside for an extended period of time, use SPF 30. Keep babies under 6 months out of the sun. Remember that babies and children are extra sensitive to sun exposure. In next month's column, I will go into more depth about skin cancer. Enjoy the sun safely this summer!

**Blueberries are one of the most beneficial fruits for your health**

Few fruits are more beneficial for your health than blueberries. USDA ranks blueberries among the highest in antioxidant content, and a powerful ally in fighting aging and associated ailments.

Blueberries are not only a taste treat, they are an antioxidant powerhouse. The antioxidant anthocyanidin found in the bluish pigment helps neutralize free radicals that damage cells and protects our bodies from developing cataracts, glaucoma, varicose veins and certain cancers.

Other antioxidants in blueberries also show promise in preventing diabetes, high cholesterol and Alzheimer's Disease. Scientists at the USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging in Boston, MA, found blueberries improved both memory and motor skills in laboratory animals. These researchers are now exploring what substances in blueberries keep message signals moving and improve brain function.

Researchers at Rutgers University found that blueberries help reduce risk for urinary tract infections similar to cranberries. They seem to prevent

the infection-causing bacteria from sticking to walls in the urinary tract. Their studies also found certain compounds in blueberries lower risk for blood clot formation and heart disease by reducing the stickiness of blood platelet cells.

Blueberries are available fresh, frozen and dried, and all forms are rich sources of antioxidants. Blueberries are a rich source of vitamins A and C, potassium and fiber, and are low in calories. When buying fresh, choose those that are firm, plump, dry with smooth skins and a silvery sheen. Berries stored too long will look shriveled. Reddish berries aren't quite ripe, but could be used in cooking. Store blueberries covered in the refrigerator, but do not wash until ready to use. Use fresh blueberries within about 10 days. Blueberries can be frozen by freezing a single layer on a cookie sheet and then transferring frozen berries to freezer bags. Wash the berries later, just prior to eating or using.

Source: Lynda Johnson, R.d., nutrition & health education specialist, University of Missouri Extension

**Farm Bureau seeks photos for calendar**

Oregon's Bounty is an award-winning calendar produced by Oregon Farm Bureau that features gorgeous photos of agriculture, its orchards, ranches, fields, and people.

Images for the 2013 calendar are being sought. Farm Bureau invites the public to submit their own photos of Oregon agriculture: the commodities, the families, the production, the

landscape, the retail, anything that depicts the beauty, technology, culture, or tradition of farming and ranching.

Both horizontal-format, high-resolution close-ups and panoramic views are needed of all types of agriculture in all seasons.

Photographers with images selected for month pages in Oregon's Bounty will receive a photo credit, copies of the calendar, and Farm Bureau membership if they have not already joined the organization.

The deadline for entries is August 1, 2012.

For photo specifications and

other contest rules, go to [oregonfb.org/media/publications](http://oregonfb.org/media/publications).

The state's largest general farm organization, Oregon Farm Bureau is a voluntary, grassroots, nonpartisan, non-profit organization representing the interests of the state's family farmers and ranchers in the public and policymaking arenas.

For more information or to request a copy of the 2012 Oregon's Bounty calendar, contact Anne Marie Moss, OFB Communications Director, at [annemarie@oregonfb.org](mailto:annemarie@oregonfb.org), 503-399-1701, ext. 313.

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