

Check for skin cancer

It is important that you become familiar with your skin and what your skin looks like normally, so changes will be noticed quickly. Skin cancer can spread fast, but is much easier to treat if it is caught early.

Check all of your skin, not just the areas that are regularly exposed to the sun. If you notice anything unusual, including any change in shape, colour or size of a spot, or the development of a spot, visit your doctor as soon as possible.



A workplace sun protection policy

Victorian work health and safety legislation requires your employer to provide a safe working environment. This legislation also requires, that as a worker you must co-operate with your employer's efforts to make the workplace safe, for example, by following any instructions for sun protection. If you work outdoors and your workplace does not offer any sun protection measures, raise this with your manager or health and safety representative.

Cancer Council Victoria's SunSmart program can assist your workplace with sun protection policy support, education and resources to help create a safe working environment.

If your job requires you to work outside, tax deductions are available for sun protection products. Talk to your tax advisor or contact the Australian Tax Office on 13 28 61 or ato.gov.au.

Be SunSmart with the free SunSmart Global UV app



Use the free SunSmart Global UV app for UV and sun protection alerts each day for your location. Visit sunsmart.com.au/app to find out more.

For more information visit sunsmart.com.au/work

A partnership between:



Protect your skin at work



Skin cancer prevention for outdoor workers

The sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the major cause of skin cancer. Australia experiences some of the highest levels of UV radiation in the world. On a fine summer day in Victoria, for example, UV levels can be high enough to damage some skin types in as little as 11 minutes.

As an outdoor worker, you receive five to 10 times more UV radiation exposure than indoor workers, putting you at a higher risk of skin cancer, including melanoma.

All skin types can be damaged by UV radiation. Damage is irreversible and will keep adding up every time your skin is overexposed to UV without sun protection.

Think UV, not heat!

UV radiation isn't like the sun's warmth, which we feel, or the sun's light, which we see. Because our senses can't detect UV, it can damage our skin without us realising. Don't be fooled by temperature – UV levels can be just as high on a cool or cloudy day, as a scorching hot one.

If you're spending extended periods of time outdoors, sun protection is recommended year-round.

In Australia it's estimated 200 melanomas and 34,000 other skin cancers diagnosed each year are the result of workplace UV exposure.

Protect your skin at work

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. SunSmart recommends outdoor workers take a five-step approach to protect their skin each day and reduce their risk of skin cancer.



Seek shade

- ✔ Work and take breaks in the shade. Where no shade exists, use temporary portable shade.
- ✔ Plan to work indoors or in the shade during the middle of the day when UV levels are strongest.
- ✔ Share outdoor tasks and rotate staff so the same person is not always out in the sun.



Slip on clothing that covers as much skin as possible

- ✔ Long pants and collared, long-sleeved shirts are best.
- ✔ Choose loose-fitting, lightweight, closely-woven material with an ultraviolet protection factor (UPF) of 50+.



Slap on a hat which shades your face, ears and neck

- ✔ Wear a broad-brimmed, bucket-style or legionnaire hat.
- ✔ If wearing a hard hat or helmet, use a brim or legionnaire-style attachment to provide protection.



- ✔ Baseball caps are not recommended, as they only provide partial protection for your face and will not shade your neck or ears.

Slide on close-fitting, wrap-around style sunglasses

- ✔ When choosing eyewear, look at the swing tag to ensure they meet the Australian Standard – AS/NZS 1067.2:2016 for sunglasses or AS 16321.4: 2023 for safety glasses.
- ✔ Look for an eye protection factor (EPF) of 10.



Slop on SPF50 or 50+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen

- ✔ Apply sunscreen 20 minutes before you go outdoors and re-apply at least every two hours.
- ✔ There are sunscreens available that are specifically for outdoor workers that will not leave marks on equipment. Try different formulas and find one that works for you.
- ✔ Protect your lips with an SPF50+ lip balm.
- ✔ Always check and follow the use by date on sunscreen.
- ✔ Sunscreen should be stored in a cool, dry place (below 30 degrees and not in the car glovebox).

Use all five forms of sun protection



Seek



Slip



Slap



Slide



Slop