Scouting provides a wealth of opportunity for exciting outdoor adventures. Scouts can be seen swimming in lakes at Scout camp, sledding during a Klondike Derby, hiking beautiful desert and mountain trails, and camping under sun and stars during all seasons of the year. To decrease risk during these activities, Scouts and leaders should understand and implement appropriate safety measures that may help to prevent injury or other bodily harm. Yet, an important safety measure that may have the longest lasting impact is often unknown or overlooked: SUN SAFETY.

In this **BSA Safety Moment**, we'll learn three factors that affect UV exposure:

- **Elevation.** If you live or play at high elevations, you could be thousands of feet closer to the sun. People who live in Utah, for example, get sunburned 30 percent faster than people living in Los Angeles, California, at sea level.
- **Reflection.** Reflection of UV radiation from light surfaces such as water, snow, and sand can damage skin.
- **Time of day.** Many outdoor activities take place between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.—the time that the sun is at its peak UV intensity.

The following are suggestions for Scouts and their leaders to protect them from sun exposure:

- Limit sun exposure between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Protect skin from sun damage: Seek shade and wear protective clothing such as long sleeves, pants, and a broad-brimmed hat.
- Protect eyes from sun damage: wear 100 percent UV protective sunglasses, even on cloudy days.
- Cover exposed skin with SPF 30+ broad-spectrum sunscreen that contains zinc oxide or titanium dioxide.
- Apply sunscreen 20 minutes before going out in the sun and reapply as directed on the label or after water sports.
- Enjoy your natural skin color; do not burn or tan skin; avoid tanning beds, sunlamps, and lying out in the sun.

RESOURCES

- [**Huntsman Cancer Institute**](#)
- [**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**](#)
- [**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent Skin Cancer**](#)