

## **Few Reach for the Sunscreen**

With the sunny season upon us, the news is not good on the dermatology front: Barely three in 10 adults usually apply sunscreen when going out into the rays, leaving seven in 10 who slather it on infrequently, if at all.

Despite an abundance of health warnings about the dangers of overexposure to the sun, only 17 percent of adults say they *always* apply sunscreen lotion when they're going out in the sun for a half-hour or more. Another 12 percent usually do so.

That leaves the vast majority at risk of a burn, or worse. Sixty-nine percent use sunscreen on a less-than-usual basis – only sometimes (16 percent), rarely if ever (35 percent) or never (18 percent.)

Bad choice, says the American Academy of Dermatology. It advises: "If you must be in the sun, use sunscreen with a sun protection factor of at least 15, even on cloudy days." ([www.aad.org/pamphlets/sunskin.html](http://www.aad.org/pamphlets/sunskin.html).)

	Use sunscreen?				
	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never (vol.)
8/5/01	17%	12	16	35	18

**GROUPS** – Women are more likely than men to wear sunscreen: Fifty-three percent of women protect themselves at least sometimes, compared to only 36 percent of men. More than six in 10 men rarely or never apply sunscreen.

	Use sunscreen?	
	At least sometimes	Rarely or never
Men	36%	62
Women	53	45

Better-educated people are more apt to use sunscreen, as are Northeasterners.

**YOUTH** – Adults with children at home are no more likely than others to use sunscreen – not a good example for the kids. The dermatology academy says people get as much as 80 percent of their lifetime sun exposure by age 18 (summers off from school will do that).

The Centers for Disease Control advises, "Young people need to know that the risk of getting skin cancer later can be greatly reduced if they start protecting their skin from the sun now." ([www.cdc.gov/cancer/nscpep/skin.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/nscpep/skin.htm))

METHODOLOGY - This ABC News.com survey was conducted by telephone August 1-5, 2001, among a random national sample of 1,023 adults. The results have a three-point error margin. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS Intersearch of Horsham, Pa.

Analysis by Jesse F. Derris.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet at:  
<http://www.abcnews.com/sections/us/PollVault/PollVault.html>

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Here are the full results:

104. If you're going to be out in the sun for a half hour or more, how likely are you to put on a sunscreen lotion - do you do that always, usually, just sometimes, or rarely if ever?

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never (vol.)	Don't go out (vol.)
8/5/01	17	12	16	35	18	2

\*\*\*End\*\*\*