

SUMMER SKIN CARE

It's that time of year – when the sun's hot rays are bombarding us with UV-B and UV-A rays. Our natural protection of the ozone has been damaged severely and we cannot consider it as protection anymore, so we must turn to topical sun-screens and sunblocks to help us protect against the damaging effects.

Here are some ingredients to look for, that protect against both UV-B and UV-A: Zinc oxide and titanium dioxide - both provide broad-spectrum protection by physically blocking the penetrating rays.

Green tea extract – a powerful antioxidant, applied topically protects against damage that can contribute to skin cancer and skin aging. EGCG (epigallocatechin gallate), a prime component of green tea, provides broad spectrum protection against UV light- induced DNA damage of the skin. Studies have shown it is exceptional in preventing the inflammation and oxidative stress associated with UV light-induced skin damage.

EGCG's benefits also include anti-aging effects. In studies, green tea extract applied topically stimulated structural support cells in the skin called keratinocytes, leading to an increase in skin thickness. Subsequent UV exposure fails to destroy these cells, suggesting that topical green tea provides a protective effect against UV light.

Other herbal extracts that have shown in studies to protect the skin are:

Rosemary extract – particularly rich in carnosic and ursolic acids, two potent antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agents. Ursolic acid was shown to inhibit the growth of cancerous melanoma cells and reactive oxygen species in skin cells to prevent damage from the skin-aging effects of UV-A light.

Turmeric extract – which contains curcumin has shown to have excellent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties.

Milk Thistle extract – which contains silibinin and silymarin, also known for their antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.

Licorice root – a powerful skin protectant, has anti-inflammatory, immune-boosting, and anti-cancer effects, including protecting against DNA damage.

Remember to use plenty of skin protection this summer – and re-apply liberally while you are outside enjoying your fun in the sun!!