

Summer has kicked into full gear and that means BBQs, trips to the beach, and vacations are doing the same. But summer's not the only one stepping up its game. The sun is also in full force, putting your skin in daily danger of sunburn, aging, and even skin cancer. In fact, did you have any idea that health experts have begun to classify tanning beds and sunlight as carcinogens?! This places them in the same category as cigarettes and asbestos! (SOURCE: <http://dfw.cbslocal.com/2013/06/03/the-risks-of-sun-exposure-and-how-to-protect-your-skin-this-summer/>). But while we're all fearing how we look in that bikini and wondering whether or not those 300 daily crunches paid off, we're not about to add fear of the sun to our summer woes, and neither should you! Check out these following tips for beating the rays and other skin enemies this summer:

1. Ditch the Make-up

Your skin has trouble breathing under all that foundation and bronzer. Plus, applying make-up prior to sunscreen creates a barrier, thus making it difficult for the sunscreen to work to its full potential. Bonus: the natural, healthy sun-kissed resulting glow will save you money at the make-up outlet anyway.

2. Wear protective outfits

Awesomely, maxi dresses are IN! When hitting up your family BBQ, try opting for a full-length, casual dress that will show off your fashion sense and keep as much of your skin protected at one time as possible. Nothing like killing two birds with one stone!

3. Perfume and Sun Aren't Facebook Friends

And worse, picture perfume's relationship with the sun as the long-term enemies who haven't seen each other in a while and still have beef to address. Bring the sun around your perfume, and perfume instantly reacts, especially our favorite citrus scents. The sun will be especially damaging to anywhere you have opted to spray. Bonus: sunscreens tend to smell like coconuts and summertime anyway. Put the fancy stuff away!

4. Stop tanning

Try to limit your intentional tanning sessions and opt for the natural darkening you'll achieve just by stepping outside the door this summer. According to the EPA (<http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvandhealth.html>), more and more skin cancer cases arrive with each year. Not only that—but sun exposure adds wrinkles and years to your age. I don't know about you, but I'm not trying to get any older!

5. Hop Back in the Water Once You're Out

Chlorine is BFF with the sun— and is just as good at drying your skin out. Hop in the shower, the ocean, or, heck, just douse yourself with a hose post-pool to get rid of the chemical and its harmful effects. Coupling chlorine exposure with sunlight is like asking to meet the duo outside on the blacktop... and they're going to win.

6. Eat healthy

Ugh, we know. With all those burgers and dogs all summer long, it's difficult to pass for the healthier stuff. In the long run, processed and sugary foods have the same goal as the rest of our enemies here, which is to simply to make you look old. Bonus: certain "good" fats, like nuts, actually contribute to keeping your skin moisturized and glowing, so hardcore dieting is not the aim here. It's only a matter of time before all of your tanning friends start asking how you achieved such a bronze.

7. Drink water

They say to never bring a knife to a gun fight, but we think it's better to have something over nothing at all. While all of these summer enemies creep up on you, there's no better tool to fight off the creepers by staying hydrated. What chemicals and UV rays try to dry out on you, water will help replenish.

Remember: 8 glasses a day keeps the sunburn away.

8. "Ladies and Gentlemen of the Class of 99: Wear Sunscreen." (SOURCE:

<http://entertainment.time.com/2010/10/05/top-10-songs-that-arent-sung/slide/baz-luhrmann-everybodys-free-to-wear-sunscreen/>)

One-upping water, sunscreen is MADE to battle UV rays. Remember as a kid, it seemed like SPF 30 was the highest your mom could douse you in? If she found 50, it was unbelievable. Have you noticed that stores are selling sunscreen lotions with SPFs at 100 and higher?? There is no coincidence here! As skin cancer becomes more common, sunscreen manufacturers are trying to keep up by formulating the strongest protectants possible. Not digging the white lotion on your skin? Most strong sunscreens are available in an easy-spray form, leaving your room for excuses slim to none!

We realize skin care can sometimes become pricey, but at the end of the day, there is not much we wouldn't pay in exchange less wrinkles, 20 years back in age, and no health risks! Admit it—some of us are paying a LOT more than the value of a bottle of sunscreen to look younger! Still, since we think you'll be so informed and prepared for the sun after reading these tips, we'd like to share with you an all-natural, home recipe for post-sun exposure, so you can keep both your pockets—and your life—as full as can be.

Moisturizing Apple Pear Mint Cleanser, inspired by Skana Spa (Turning Stone Resort, NY)

To soothe dry skin after a day in the hot sun (suitable for dry/normal skin):

What you'll need:

- ¼ cup greek yogurt
- 5 thin pear slices
- 5 thin slices of cucumber
- 1 teaspoon dried mint
- dash of Honey

Mix ingredients in a blender until the mixture is smooth and thin. Rinse face with warm water to open pores. Apply mixture. Rinse completely. Pat dry.