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"Sun Protection and Skincare for Summer"

Names of sunscreen chemicals:

- Oxybenzone, avobenzone, octisalate, octocrylene, homosalate, octinoxaye.
- Oxybenzone clear and spreads easily.

MI, MCI (Methylisothiazolinone) was named allergen of the year is 2013. Found as the preservative in 66 sunscreens and 39 SPF rated moisturizers. It is especially harmful to children and found in baby products labeled "hypoallergenic".

The FDA did get involved and has tried to put some regulations on sunscreen, but the ingredients that are harmful, (and first used in the late 1970's) have been grandfathered in. This means that they legally cannot be removed whether they are deemed harmful or not.

What's the big deal?

Oxybenzones, or benzones, mimic hormones because their particles act like estrogen. They have been shown to react with sex and thyroid hormones. They lower testosterone levels in young boys. They can also cause endometriosis and have been found to alter sperm production which may result in longer conception time.

How sunscreen works:

Take the number of minutes it takes for YOU to start to turn red in direct sunlight (say 10 minutes...) Multiply that number by the SPF in your sunscreen. (say 30). That would mean you have 300 minutes in the sun before you would need to reapply.

Sunscreen is measured by the length of time that you can spend in sunlight. It is not measured by thickness. Applying two sunscreens (layered) or applying a thicker layer does not change the effectiveness of the product.

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What is Safe?

- Zinc Oxide preferred (stronger than Titanium Dioxide)
- Titanium Dioxide

Zinc and Titanium Dioxide contain nanoparticles that do not break down in the sunlight which makes them more stable. They are a physical block, which means they do not penetrate the skin.

Be careful of mineral powders that contain Zinc and Titanium because they can be inhaled which has been found to cause lung tissue damage.

Other quick sunshine and oxybenzone facts:

Sunscreens with oxybenzone have killed off fish, damaged coral reefs and have been found to disrupt hormones in amphibians.

It's in your drinking water! Oxybenzone is not filtered out of our drinking water.

Melanoma has tripled over the past 35 years. There is no scientific proof that sunscreen prevents most cancers. Last year sunscreen sales were higher than ever recorded, and last year skin cancer was at its highest recorded levels.

We Need the Sun!!! Sunshine causes the body to produce Vitamin D. It is NOT the source of vitamin D. We need vitamin D for a healthy immune system. Vitamin D wards off cancer and heart disease.

Just because a sunscreen lists Zinc and Titanium Dioxide under its active ingredients does not mean it is safe! What is the base it is delivered in? Are there parabens? Dimethicone? Other chemicals found to be harmful?

Keep in mind there are products out there created by nature (not regulated by the FDA) that make great sun protectants. Aloe Vera and certain berries are great examples. They contain antioxidants which have been proven to ward off free radicals (skin damaging particles) created by the sun and our environment.

Remember: You have to be your own health advocate and knowledge is power...