

on call

spray-on sunscreens?

Q Are spray-on sunscreens as effective as traditional lotions? Is there a safety concern with spraying the aerosol on my kids' faces? What SPF do you recommend for kids?

Summertime is almost here and with it comes an almost limitless number of exciting outdoor opportunities. Since many of these involve being outside under the sun, most people, especially parents, are concerned about excess sun exposure and worried about skin cancer. The FDA made changes in its sunscreen labeling — and as the new labels will go into effect this summer, consumers will want to take note. Spray-on products are indeed effective, but it's important to use enough to cover the child's body thoroughly. Spray sunscreen away from the face, as inhaling the product could pose possible risk, or use cream instead.

Previously, UVB rays were the primary concern, as only those rays were thought to contribute to sunburn. However, it is now recognized that UVA rays contribute to skin cancer as well, and the term 'broad-spectrum' can be applied only to products that block both UVB and UVA rays. Additionally, 50+ is now the highest listed SPF (sun protection factor), as there is no evidence that products with an SPF more than 50 provide any additional benefit. The American Academy of Dermatology recommends at least SPF 30 or higher. Furthermore, the term "water resistant" will replace waterproof and sweat proof on sunblock labels, given that all products will eventually wash off regardless of the claimed duration of a sunblock's effect in water. For this reason, it is important to reapply at least every two hours.



stuttering toddlers

Q Our 2-year-old is stuttering. Will he outgrow this or will he always have a problem?

Stuttering is a common but sometimes disconcerting communication disorder that most often begins in childhood. Children who stutter often repeat parts of words (or even whole words), prolong sounds in the middle of words or stop speaking for lengthy pauses in the middle of speaking.

There are several factors that can contribute to stuttering. Genetic, developmental and neurological factors, together with family dynamics, can play varying roles for individuals in the development of stuttering. Of the more than 3 million Americans who stutter, boys are affected four times as commonly as girls. Many children will experience a temporary period of stuttering, with a milder degree of symptoms, such as repeating a syllable only once or twice within a given word. The child might also use fillers such as "uh," "er" or "um," as well. Generally this pattern comes and goes as the child passes through different stages of speech development. Stuttering issues are most common between the ages of 18 months and 5 years of age. About 5 percent of children will go through a period of stuttering that may last around six months or more. The majority of these children will lose their stutter as they age, leaving only about one percent with a lingering problem. There are many famous people who have stuttered, including James Earl Jones, Winston Churchill, Marilyn Monroe, Carly Simon, John Stossel and King George VI. In general, the earlier you begin intervention for stuttering, the better. Talk to your pediatrician to learn more about stuttering treatments and approaches.