

Top Sun Safety Tips

For patients on long-term Azathioprine or Mycophenolate From the British Association for Dermatology

Although this is uncommon, patients on long-term Azathioprine or Mycophenolate Mofetil are more likely than others to develop skin cancers, especially if fair-skinned, and so should avoid excessive exposure to sunlight. To further protect the skin it is recommended that patients should follow the below *top sun safety tips*:

- Protect your skin with clothing (e.g. close weave clothing or knit cotton which cannot be seen through), and don't forget to wear a hat that protects your face, neck and ears, and a pair of UV protective sunglasses.
- Spend time in the shade between 11am and 3pm when it's sunny. Step out of the sun before your skin has a chance to redden or burn.
- When choosing a sunscreen look for a high protection SPF (SPF 30 or more) to protect against UVB, and the UVA circle logo and/or 4 or 5 UVA stars to protect against UVA. Apply plenty of sunscreen 15 to 30 minutes before going out in the sun, and reapply frequently (every two hours) and again straight after swimming and towel-drying.
- Sunscreens should not be used as an alternative to clothing and shade, rather they offer additional protection. No sunscreen will provide 100% protection.
- Ensure that you coat all visible skin; the sunscreen should remain visible on your skin. Do not rub it in, as this will make it less effective as a barrier. If in doubt please discuss with your doctor, as they can advise an appropriate sunscreen for you.
- The British Association of Dermatologists recommends that you tell your doctor about any changes to a mole or patch of skin. If your GP is concerned about your skin, make sure you see a Consultant Dermatologist – an expert in diagnosing skin cancer. Your doctor can refer you for free through the NHS.