Compliance with sunscreen advice in a survey of adults engaged in outdoor winter recreation at high-elevation ski areas.

Published by admin on Mon, 08/19/2013 - 3:02pm

Title: Compliance with sunscreen advice in a survey of adults engaged in outdoor winter recreation at high-elevation ski areas.

Publication Type: Journal Article
Year of Publication: 2012
Authors: Buller, DB, Andersen, PA, Walkosz, BJ, Scott, MD, Maloy, JA, Dignan, MB, Cutter, GR

Journal: J Am Acad Dermatol
Volume: 66
Issue: 1
Pagination: 63-70
Date Published: 2012 Jan
ISSN: 1097-6787

Keywords: Adult, Altitude, Data Collection, Humans, Male, Neoplasms, Radiation-Induced, Patient Compliance, Skiing, Skin Neoplasms, Sun Protection Factor, Sunscreening Agents

Abstract

BACKGROUND: Adults are advised to wear sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher, apply it up to 30 minutes before sun exposure, and reapply it after 2 hours to reduce exposure to ultraviolet radiation in sunlight for the prevention of skin cancer.

OBJECTIVE: This study investigated the extent to which adults comply with sunscreen advice.

METHODS: A survey was conducted with 4837 adult skiers and snowboarders at 28 high-altitude ski areas in western North America in January through April 2001 through 2002. Respondents self-reported use of sunscreen, its SPF, time of first application, and reapplication.

RESULTS: Only 4.4% (95% confidence interval [CI] = ±0.6) of adults were in full compliance with all sunscreen advice. Half (49.8% [95% CI = ±1.4]) complied with SPF 15 or higher advice. Of those wearing sunscreen, 73.2% (95% CI = ±1.8) applied the sunscreen 30 minutes before beginning skiing/snowboarding, but only 20.4% (95% CI = ±2.0) complied with advice to reapply it after 2 hours. Total compliance was lowest during inclement weather, on low-ultraviolet days, by men, and among respondents who believed skin cancer was unimportant and with low sun-sensitive skin. It was positively associated with wearing lip balm and hats with a brim.

LIMITATIONS: The sample was predominantly...
male and of high socioeconomic status; the results apply most to winter recreation when ultraviolet radiation levels are low, and sunscreen use was assessed by self-report.

CONCLUSION: Although the recommendation to use SPF 15 or higher sunscreen has reached many adults, the reapplication advice is heeded by few adults and needs to be highlighted in future sun safety promotions.