

# Which sunscreen is right for you?

AUG 11, 2026



## Featured topic and speaker

Not sure which sunscreen to choose? Dermatologist Micah Brown, MD, explains the key features that matter most, from broad-spectrum protection and SPF 30+ to water resistance and finding a formula that fits your skin tone and skin type.

Find out the differences between mineral and chemical sunscreens, how UVA and UVB rays affect the skin, and get practical tips for finding a sunscreen you'll actually want to wear.

If you have questions about sunscreen or skin cancer prevention, talk with your physician.

Find out more about what doctors want patients to know about [sunscreen](#).

- Sign up for our free weekly newsletter, "[What Doctors Want Patients To Know™](#)"
- Subscribe to [@americanmedicalassociation](#) on [YouTube](#).
- [Sign up](#) for Morning Rounds and free daily newsletters from the AMA.
- Follow [#AMA](#) on [social media](#).

## Speaker

- **Micah Brown, MD**, dermatologist

## Transcript

**Dr. Brown:** Now more than ever, we have the widest range of sunscreens for every body and every skin tone. When looking for the proper sunscreen, here are a couple of things that you should keep in mind.

Hi, my name is Micah Brown. I'm a dermatologist, and I've been a part of the AMA for about eight years.

People should look for a couple of things when deciding on a sunscreen. It should be broad spectrum. This means that it protects against UVA and UVB rays. Ultraviolet A rays penetrate a little bit deeper into the skin and can cause things like hyperpigmentation and exacerbate aging and wrinkles. UVB rays don't penetrate as deep, but they can cause damage that can lead to skin cancers.

It should be at least an SPF 30 or greater. It will cover you for two hours. It should be water resistant, which means that, with sweat and getting in the water, it won't completely wash away. I always tell my patients to get a sunscreen that is non-comedogenic, which means that it will not cause excessive acne.

There are two different types of sunscreen. There's mineral, and there's chemical sunscreen. Another name for mineral is physical sunscreen. When you apply it, it sits on top of the skin, and it blocks the rays from penetrating.

On the other hand, there's chemical sunscreen that, when you apply it, the rays are absorbed by the sunscreen. What I would say is, if you are a darker or browner tone, you can switch to mineral-tinted, and that way it'll blend in with your skin a little bit better.

In order to pick a sunscreen that you'll wear every single day, there's two things that you should look out for. You should look out for the feel of sunscreen. If it's smooth and elegant and not gunky and cakey, then you might like it a little bit better.

And number two, you want to pick a sunscreen that can nicely be rubbed into the skin. White casts are a big no no, so make sure you pick a sunscreen that looks invisible. If you have any questions about sunscreen, please talk to your doctor.

---

**Disclaimer:** This video is for educational purposes only and is not medical advice. If you have questions about your health, please consult your doctor.