

Sun Exposure

Baylor SportsCare

We'll give you a healthy advantage.

Baylor SportsCare provides the winning combination of education, support and sports medicine for athletic groups of all ages. We can help you:

- Prevent & treat sports-related injuries by providing medical coverage and educational programs
- Access Baylor Health Care System specialized sports medicine physicians* and services throughout the Metroplex
- Develop and promote athletic programs and activities
- Organize special events

For more information about SportsCare, or for help in finding a physician who is right for you, call **1-800-4BAYLOR** and ask for "Baylor SportsCare" or visit us at:

BaylorHealth.com/SportsCare

*Physicians are members of the medical staff at one of Baylor health Care System's subsidiary, community or affiliated medical centers and are neither employees nor agents of those medical centers. Baylor University Medical Center or Baylor Health Care System. CE 12.07

Many athletes focus on proper conditioning and training to avoid injuries, but not enough of them consider the importance of preventing skin cancer.

According to the American Cancer Society, most of the more than 1 million cases of non-melanoma skin cancer diagnosed yearly in the United States are sun related. Melanoma, the most serious type, will account for about 7,800 of the 10,600 deaths due to skin cancer each year.

Yet despite documented benefits, many athletes do not use sunscreen during outdoor practices or games. In one study of 139 athletes, 46 percent blamed lack of availability, and 33 percent thought they didn't need it because of various misconceptions. Others said they didn't consider the weather hot enough for sunburn.

Athletes who play in the daytime are exposed to a tremendous amount of UV light. The American Academy of Dermatology recommends avoiding sun exposure from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., precisely the time many teams are playing or practicing. Sweating makes the risk worse. Perspiration on the skin lowers the minimal erythema dose, the lowest UV exposure needed to turn the skin barely pink.

To lower your risk of skin cancer, try to follow these guidelines:

- Whenever possible, try to schedule games, practices or physical activity before 11 a.m. or after 4 p.m., when the sun's rays are not as powerful.
- When taking a break, try to sit or stand in the shade. If the field has no shade, bring an umbrella or portable tent.
- Use sunscreen! At least 15 to 30 minutes before going outside, apply a broad spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher.
- Reapply sunscreen to all exposed skin 15 to 30 minutes after sun exposure begins and then every two hours.
- Athletes should choose a waterproof or sweatproof sunscreen.
- For athletic attire, choose materials that are light and cool, such as cotton or lightweight synthetics. Shirts with collars can help protect your neck.

Coaches, especially, should encourage younger players to protect their skin. They can set an example by using sunscreen themselves at games and practices.