

Harper's

BAZZAR

10
WAYS TO GET
MORE
ENERGY

DEMI
LOVATO
ON LOVE,
ADDICTION &
SURVIVAL

AGE-
PROOF
YOUR SKIN

SUMMER'S
HOTTEST
FASHION

GET
YOUNGER
LOOKING
LEGS

THE

BEAUTY

ISSUE

NEW HAIR & MAKEUP
MUST-HAVES

HOW SAFE IS YOUR SPF?

New research sheds light on what's best for the well-being of your skin—and the planet.

By Ying Chu

Photograph by Kenneth Willardt

FASHION EDITOR: Amanda Alagem



Made in the shade. Cap, Hermès.
BEAUTY BAZAAR Apply
Supergoop! Shine On Lip Screen
SPF 50 under your lipstick to
protect sunburn-prone lips (\$22).

SUNSCREEN GETS a bad rap. It's inelegant and chalky. It causes breakouts and flares up fiery allergic rashes. It's killing our coral reefs. And the list goes on. The latest FDA studies only drive the narrative: In findings published earlier this year, six common chemical sunscreen ingredients—avobenzone, oxybenzone, octocrylene, homosalate, octisalate, and octinoxate—were found to have absorbed through the skin and into the bloodstream after just a single application, raising questions of safety, especially for children and pregnant women. “The rapid absorption of these chemicals has inspired the FDA to request follow-up testing for further study,” explains New York dermatologist Macrene Alexiades, M.D., an associate clinical professor at the Yale School of Medicine. “Importantly, they did not request additional testing for the two physical [a.k.a. mineral] sunscreens, titanium dioxide and zinc oxide, which are considered safe.”

We know what you're thinking. But this isn't an excuse to forgo sun protection altogether. That is, if you're a sensible person and have an active interest in avoiding skin cancer (by far the most common cancer; more than 100,000 cases of melanoma, the deadliest form of skin cancer, will be diagnosed in 2020, according to the American Cancer Society). And, perhaps even more urgently for some, want to ward off the myriad signs of skin aging—lines and wrinkles, spots, enlarged pores, sagging, uneven texture. If so, consider this an opportune time to Marie Kondo your sunscreen supply.

“I have always favored mineral sunscreens,” says New York dermatologist Amy Wechsler, M.D., who points to a host of compelling reasons: longer-lasting, broad-spectrum protection; immediate effectiveness (as opposed to chemicals, which take a half hour to kick in); as well as sensitive skin, and coral reef safety. (Hawaii is the first state to regulate sunscreen use, banning oxybenzone and octinoxate, which are believed to contribute to coral bleaching, as of 2021.) “But I'll still use chemicals *and* minerals for daily protection, just not in the water,” she adds.

Where mineral sunblocks often disappoint is for people of color. “Most patients with darker skin don’t like the gray hue that is cast over their skin when they wear many of them,” says Rosemarie Ingleton, M.D., a New York dermatologist. “There are a few brands that have figured out how to produce micronized minerals that absorb well. I personally use NeoStrata Matrix Support SPF 30 [a chemical sunscreen] (\$74). And when I’m seriously out in the sun, I switch to EltaMD UV Clear SPF 46 (\$35), which has zinc oxide but doesn’t leave a mask.”

Some skin-care brands are savvy to our evolving needs. Ingleton favorite EltaMD has just introduced a full-body, chemical-free UV Active Broad-Spectrum SPF 50+ (\$29) with transparent zinc oxide. Neutrogena’s Sheer Zinc Mineral Sunscreen Stick SPF 50+ (\$12.99) goes on clear and dries matte. With the help of a subtle tint, mineral blocks StriVectin Full Screen SPF 30 100% Mineral Vanishing Tint (\$39) and Ilia Super Serum Skin Tint SPF 40 (\$46) disappear once rubbed into the face. And Shiseido’s sweat- and water-resistant Ultimate Sun Protector SPF 50+ Cream (\$40), a mineral-chemical blend wildly popular among surfers, has just been reformulated to be Hawaii-compliant.

Healthy options aplenty, it takes strategy and dedication to emerge after Labor Day sun damage-free. Wechsler, a fair-haired doctor who is 50 and has experienced pigmentation issues like melasma, admits that this level of UV protection can feel excessive for most people. “I layer everything—multiple sunblocks, a baseball hat, sunglasses, a long-sleeved rash guard—and I even bring an extra rash guard to change into when I get out of the water,” she says. “I’ve been accused of not looking cute at the beach, but I don’t care.” And if you too want your skin to look younger than your years, you won’t either. ■
