The sun emits radiation in the form of ultraviolet (UV) light, which is classified into three types by wavelength: UVA, UVB, and UVC. UVB and UVA light can reach the Earth’s surface and it is important to protect yourself when you will be exposed to sunlight!

- Both UVA and UVB reach the Earth’s surface because they are not fully absorbed by the ozone layer.
- UVA penetrates deeply into the skin, and is the type of UV radiation that causes wrinkling or leathering of the skin — the effects associated with “photoaging.”
- UVB is the type of radiation that causes sun burns. Both types can cause skin cancer.

**Important FACTS:** UV radiation is at its highest when and where the sun’s rays are the strongest. This means that UV levels will be highest around noon on a clear sunny day, as well as during the summer months.

Overexposure to UV radiation has negative health effects which range from short-term effects, such as sunburns, to long-term effects, such as skin cancer. Over exposure to UV radiation can also cause eye cataracts, eye damage, skin aging, growths on the skin, and suppression of the immune system.

Every year in the United States over one million people are diagnosed with skin cancer and as a result of skin cancer, one person dies every hour.

*For more information on how to protect yourself this summer, visit: www.epa.gov*