



# spotlight on health

## Staying Sun Smart Means More Than Sunscreen

(NAPSA)—Although sunscreen with SPF protection has become a staple in the daily fight against the sun's harmful rays during the summer months, it is only enough to win half the battle. For a complete victory over threatening UV rays, steps must be taken to protect not only the skin, but also the eyes every day, no matter what the season.

Exposure to UV light can result in common types of damage to the eye's surface, including photokeratitis, or "sunburn" to the eye's surface, as well as pingeculae and pterygia, benign yellowish growths. Damage to the eyes from UV light is also cumulative over time and can add to the growth of age-related diseases, such as cataracts and macular degeneration, the leading cause of blindness in people over 60 years old, according to Dr. Lisa Bunin, ophthalmologist and oculoplastic surgeon.

"People have made it a routine to protect their skin from the sun," said Dr. Bunin. "Now it's time for them to begin protecting their eyes from damaging UV rays."

According to a survey conducted by Transitions Optical, most people are not even aware of the potential dangers: 79 percent of people know the sun can cause skin cancer, but only six percent know it can harm the eyes. The survey also revealed that most people take few precautions to protect their eyes against the sun's harmful rays.

Because UV rays are invisible to the eye and present all year long, they can pose a threat when it's least expected, such as on a cloudy day. To protect your entire body from UV rays throughout the year, here are a few "sun smart" tips:

- Stay out of the sun from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.;



**Sunscreen isn't enough to prevent damage from the sun's harmful rays. Use other protection, such as a hat, eyewear with UV protection and lip balm.**

- Wear a hat or other protective clothing;
- Choose eyewear with larger frames for more protection;
- Wear lotion and lip balm with SPF protection;
- Wear eyewear that blocks 100 percent UVA and UVB radiation; and
- Remember that UV rays pose a threat every day, even on cloudy days.

In addition to protecting eyes, lenses with UV protection also shield the delicate tissue around the eye. According to Dr. Bunin, this is the area that quickly shows signs of aging and is a frequent site of skin cancers.

Eyeglass lenses that darken when exposed to UV light, known as photochromics, are one way to provide everyday protection from UV rays. Prescription lens wearers might want to consider photochromics from Transitions Optical. Transitions® Lenses not only provide 100 percent automatic UV protection, but also reduce glare by adjusting to all light conditions for everyday comfort and convenience.