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Prevent Blindness Declares May as Ultraviolet Awareness Month to Educate Public on Potential Health Dangers of UV Exposure to Eyes

Prevent Blindness Offers Materials Such as Fact Sheets, Social Media Graphics and a Dedicated Web Resource to Provide Important Information on Ways to Protect Sight from Ultraviolet Rays

CHICAGO (April 27, 2021) – Because extended exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays can cause damage to the eyes, [Prevent Blindness](#), the nation’s oldest eye health and safety organization, has declared May as Ultraviolet Awareness Month. The group seeks to educate the public on the increased risk of everything from “corneal sunburns” (photokeratitis) to diseases such as cataract and eye cancers.

Prevent Blindness offers a variety of free resources on UV protection to keep vision healthy, including fact sheets and a dedicated webpage at: [PreventBlindness.org/sun-and-vision](https://www.preventblindness.org/sun-and-vision). Shareable infographics on sun safety are also available.

According to the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#), many factors determine the amount of UV exposure including:

- Geography- UV rays are strongest in areas close to the equator.
- Altitude- Higher altitudes have greater UV exposure because there is less atmosphere to absorb UV rays.
- Time of year- The sun’s angle in relation to the Earth varies according to season. During the summer months the sun’s rays hit the earth at a steeper angle, resulting in a greater amount of UV radiation.
- Time of day- UV is most intense at noon when the sun is at its highest point in the sky. Especially in the summer months, it is a good idea to remain indoors during the peak sun hours of 10am to 4pm.
- Weather conditions- Even under cloud cover it is possible to damage your skin and eyes, and cause long-term damage.
- Reflection- Surfaces such as snow, sand, pavement, grass, or water can reflect much of the UV radiation that reaches them.

Wearing UV-blocking sunglasses with a brimmed hat is the best protection against UV rays. Prevent Blindness recommends choosing sunglasses for children, adults and senior citizens that:

- reduce glare
- filter out 99-100% of UV rays
- are comfortable to wear
- do not distort colors

“No matter the weather, it’s important to always wear UV-blocking eyewear when we are outdoors to help protect our eyes and save our sight for years to come,” said Jeff Todd, president and CEO of Prevent Blindness.

For more information on UV eye protection, please visit the Prevent Blindness dedicated Web page at [PreventBlindness.org/sun-and-vision](https://www.preventblindness.org/sun-and-vision), or call (800) 331-2020.

About Prevent Blindness

Founded in 1908, Prevent Blindness is the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization dedicated to fighting blindness and saving sight. Focused on promoting a continuum of vision care, Prevent Blindness touches the lives of millions of people each year through public and professional education, advocacy, certified vision screening and training, community and patient service programs and research. These services are made possible through the generous support of the American public. Together with a network of affiliates, Prevent Blindness is committed to eliminating preventable blindness in America. For more information, visit us at [preventblindness.org](https://www.preventblindness.org), and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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