

When the Sun's Out Get Out!

Uffculme School Newsletter July 2017



For most of us, a sunny day just makes everything seem easier and better. But did you know that the sun has an effect on both our physical and emotional wellbeing?

Sunlight helps regulate your internal body clock. When it's light the sleep hormone **melatonin** is blocked. When it's dark, your brain releases melatonin which helps you to feel sleepy and aids a good night's sleep. A good night's sleep helps you to be physically and emotionally more healthy as well as helping you to concentrate and learn more effectively.

Sunlight also helps your brain to produce **serotonin**. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter that is known as one of the 'happy' hormones. It is thought to help regulate happiness, anxiety and mood and may have an effect on depression.

There has been a lot in the press recently about the importance of **vitamin D**. Vitamin D helps to regulate the amount of calcium and phosphate in the body. These nutrients are needed to keep bones, teeth and muscles healthy. There are some foods that naturally contain vitamin D, but the best source of vitamin D is from the sun. It is very important not to burn, but it is also important to get some sunshine on your skin without sunscreen.

So in summary sunlight:

- Helps your body regulate the nutrients it needs to keep your bones, teeth and muscles strong and healthy.
- Helps you get a better night's sleep.
- Helps release happy hormones that make you feel good.

Even when it is not bright and sunny outside, being out in daylight has lots of positive benefits for your mental and physical health. So make the most of the summer, get outside and feel better in body and mind.

Staying Safe in the Sun

The longer you stay in the sun, especially for prolonged periods without sun protection, the greater your risk of skin cancer so you need to be careful to protect yourself *before* your skin starts to turn red or burn. How long it takes for your skin to go red or burn varies from person to person and how strong the sun is. The fairer your skin, the quicker you will burn. However, the fairer your skin, the quicker you will produce vital Vitamin D.

If you plan to be out in the sun for long, cover up with suitable clothing, wrap-around sunglasses, stay in the shade when you can and apply at least SPF15 sunscreen.



For more information and advice about how to stay safe in the sun visit
<http://www.nhs.uk/LiveWell/Summerhealth/Pages/Summerhealthhome.aspx>

Uffculme School Student Welfare Services
Looking out for our students