



FEDERATION OF AMERICAN CONSUMERS AND TRAVELERS

## - NEWS RELEASE -

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **New Rules and Ratings for Sunscreens**

EDWARDSVILLE, IL, June 15, 2011 - Vicki Rolens, managing director of the Federation of American Consumers and Travelers (FACT), reports that the Food and Drug Administrations (FDA) has announced new regulations designed to make sunscreens easier to understand and use.

Sunscreen manufacturers will be required to test their products' effectiveness against sun rays that pose the greatest risk of skin cancer (UVA rays) and to follow stricter guidelines when describing how well their products block UVB rays.

Sunscreens that don't protect against both UVA and UVB rays and that have a sun protection factor (SPF) below 15 will have to carry warning label: "This product has been shown only to help prevent sunburn, not skin cancer or early skin aging."

Up until now, the FDA has only required testing for UVB rays that cause sunburn. That's what the familiar SPF measure is based on. The new regulations require testing for the more dangerous UVA rays, which can penetrate glass and are most commonly linked to wrinkles and skin cancer.

Products that protect against both UVA and UVB will be labeled "broad spectrum."

The FDA rules will also standardize the older SPF protection rankings for UVB rays. Only sunscreens with an SPF of 15 or higher can claim to lower the risk of cancer. The FDA also proposed capping the highest SPF value at 50, unless companies can provide results of further testing that support a higher number.

The SPF figure indicates the amount of sun exposure needed to cause sunburn on sunscreen-protected skin compared with unprotected skin. For example, an SPF rating of 30 means it would take the person 30 times longer to burn wearing sunscreen than with exposed skin.

FDA will also prohibit sunscreen marketing claims like "waterproof" and "sweatproof," which the agency said "are exaggerations of performance."

The American Cancer Society estimates that about 68,130 new melanomas were diagnosed in the United States during 2010 (about 38,870 in men and 29,260 in women). Incidence rates for melanoma have been rising for at least 30 years.

-----

This news release has been issued by the Federation of American Consumers and Travelers (FACT), a consumer organization formed under the not-for-profit corporation laws of the District of Columbia in 1984. FACT serves more than 1 million consumers nationwide. Additional information on FACT may be found in the Encyclopedia of Associations, and by visiting the association's Web site ([www.usafact.org](http://www.usafact.org)). Informative, unbiased news bulletins are regularly disseminated by FACT to help its members remain current on matters which might seriously impact their lives. The association does not offer support to -- and does not receive support from -- any political party or movement. In addition to publishing consumer-related reports, the association provides more than 40 benefits for its members, ranging from medical insurance and dental discounts to prescription drug savings and scholarships. FACT's administrative office is located at 318 Hillsboro Avenue, Edwardsville, IL 62025

FACTnewsreleasesconsumerhotlinemedicalinsurancedentaldiscountssunscreen