



Dr. Linda's VBF 'Fun in the Sun' Facts

Approved by VBF Medical Experts

1) Anyone with a facial vascular birthmark, regardless of age, should wear a hat and sunglasses when in the sun. Sun-protective clothing is highly recommended, especially when it covers the birthmark area.

2) Zinc oxide-based sunscreens are best for vascular birthmarks. It is also important to use sunscreens with a high level of protection against the sun. Look for GRASE (Generally Regarded As Safe and Effective) on the label. Broad-spectrum sunscreens with 70 to 100 SPF that are approved by the AAP, AAPD, or AAD are ideal. Be sure to read the label!

3) Newborns up to 6 months old are not recommended to use sunscreen by the AAP because they should not be exposed to direct sunlight. If they must, use a very small amount of a zinc oxide-based sunscreen. First, test a small spot for any reaction. If there is a reaction, contact a pediatric dermatologist.

4) Laser treatment patients should avoid the sun for two weeks before treatment, and up to six weeks after treatment.

5) If you cannot avoid getting tan in the summer and you are receiving laser treatment for a PWS birthmark, wait until the tan fades to resume treatment. This applies to all ages.

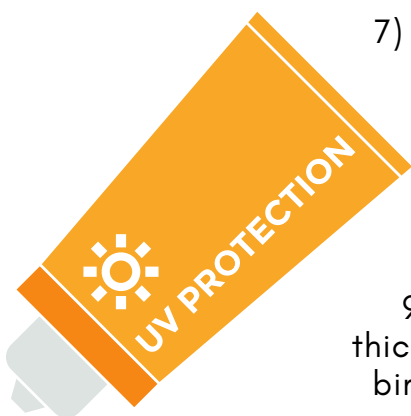
6) If you accidentally get a severe sunburn on a PWS birthmark, it is important to see a pediatric dermatologist/dermatologist. Avoid laser treatment following a bad sunburn until the skin is completely healed.

7) If you are planning on going to the beach or playing in water, use a waterproof sunscreen and avoid the sun during peak intensity. Resting in shaded areas is preferred.

8) Do not substitute a good sunscreen for SPF makeup. Sunscreen must be used in addition to makeup (even if it has SPF in it), especially when covering a birthmark.

9) Sun exposure greatly increases the risk of skin cobbling and thickening. It takes more effort to treat sun damage to a vascular birthmark than it does to wear a hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen. Prevention is key!

10) The sun can be fun, no question about it! However, it is not a friend to a PWS birthmark or Infantile Hemangioma. Remember, blood vessels enlarge in the heat! Direct sun exposure makes a vascular birthmark ripe for tissue thickening and cobbling at any age. One day in the sun (without proper precautions) can undo many successful laser treatments. Be safe and be smart!



-Dr. Linda, VBF