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Short Communication

Anti-Aging starts with sunscreen: when, which, and what for?

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Abstract

Statement of the Problem: With the recent increase in skin cancer incidence and heightened public awareness regarding the deleterious effects of sun exposure on skin, there is a surge in the use of sunscreen products. Dermatologists and cosmetologists are often at the frontline among other healthcare practitioners in recommending these products to patients. However, there is little evidence-based knowledge about the real efficacy of sunscreens in protecting against aging and skin neoplasia. The purpose of this study is to examine the peer-reviewed literature and perform a meta-analysis evaluating the protection offered by various sunscreen formulations against skin cancers and sun-induced aging.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: A literature search was conducted on PubMed with “sunscreen”, “aging” and various types of skin cancers. The resulting abstracts were screened for relevance. For all the relevant abstracts, the full text was retrieved and analyzed.

Conclusion & Significance: There is a huge discrepancy between public perception of sunscreen efficacy and the real protection offered against aging. SPF factor is especially misleading in providing a false sense of security. Among various sunscreen preparations, the ones with physical blockers are most effective. When used correctly, sunscreens offer protection against common epidermal carcinomas such as squamous cell carcinoma and basal cell carcinoma. However, there is controversy regarding the protection offered by sunscreens against melanoma, the deadliest type of skin cancer. Some studies claim a protective effect while others conclude that there is no difference or even that the use of sunscreens puts someone at increased risk for melanoma. The conclusions of this study are useful for medical practitioners such as dermatologists in adjusting their recommendations to patients regarding the use of sunscreens.

Biography

Adelina Timofte received her MD from “Victor Babes” University of Medicine, Timisoara, Romania in 2007. After completing two years of Pediatrics, she started her Residency in Dermatology and she is currently PhD

student and dermatologist with particular interest in wound healing, genodermatosis, bullous disorders, aesthetic dermatology and clinical trials.

Recent Publications

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