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Skin Cancer Doesn't Discriminate: Why You Should Wear Sunscreen No Matter Your Skin Tone



Imagine this, you're sitting by the pool, drinking your favorite ice-cold drink, catching some rays. While taking a sip, you realize that you didn't put on any sunscreen, and you continue sipping your drink thinking you don't need it. To all my dark skin beauties, I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but you do. Turns out, your little daydream was actually a nightmare.

A common misconception is that women of color, specifically black women, do not need sunscreen, which is false. Luckily, I'm here to debunk the myth that sunscreen is only for lighter skin. It's true that fairer skin tones are more likely to sunburn than darker skin; however, skin cancer does not discriminate. And I don't know about you but I don't take risks with my skin.

As a brown skin girl myself, I did not want to wear sunscreen at all. Mostly because I'm stubborn but also because I went my whole life without using it and I'm still alive.

However, according to [Dr. Sheel Desai Solomon](#), a dermatologist in North Carolina, "While darker skin does not burn as easily, it's the damage you can't see right away that is particularly worrisome." The damage that cannot be seen includes cancer, wrinkles, sunburns, dark spots, and even hyperpigmentation. As someone who struggled with hyperpigmentation myself, I did not see any results with any of the products I used until I started wearing sunscreen.

Even though Black people are less likely to contract skin cancer, we are more likely to die from it.

According to the Skin Cancer Foundation, the overall melanoma survival rate for African Americans is only 65% versus 91% for Caucasians. This harsh contrast is simply because of late detection and the lack of awareness about the effects of skin exposure within the black community. Studies found that doctors are less likely to be suspicious of symptoms of melanoma and other skin cancers in Black and Latinx patients, which leads to late diagnoses. We all need to continue to educate each other before it's too late.

3 Sunscreens That You Need to Try

Despite all this information, you may be thinking, "Ananda, I hate sunscreen." I did too, there are many sunscreens that are not so nice to darker skin tones. They leave a white, heavy cast and are extremely greasy. Fear not, I am here to the rescue.

1. Glossier Daily Shield

This SPF 35 melts into your skin without leaving a white shade. This clear gel formula is a dark skin girl's best friend, while also protecting your skin. Only priced at \$25, this sunscreen is vegan and appropriate for all skin types.

2. Supergoop Unseen Sunscreen Broad Spectrum

This is only \$32 and is SPF 40! Remember when I briefly mentioned a sunscreen I was using that helped clear my hyperpigmentation? This is the one I was talking about. This is also broad-spectrum, which means it protects against UVA/UVB rays and everything in between.

3. Black Girl Sunscreen

(Yes, that is the actual name) This SPF 30 was made specifically to protect and treat dark skin against hyperpigmentation and acne. Made by people of color for people of color with only natural ingredients, this sunscreen is definitely on my list to try. Priced at \$18.99, you can get 20% off with code: TIARA20.

Before this skin session comes to a close there are a few things I want to leave with you! Do not wear sunscreen only in the summer! UV rays can penetrate clouds all throughout the year and skin cancer can target any part of your body. To all my makeup wearers: sunscreen goes on after moisturizer but before foundation. Even if you don't try my recommendations dermatologists encourage you to wear sunscreen that is SPF 30 or higher.

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