



Our climate

Being out and about enables you to connect with your community, help stay healthy and enjoy Queensland's great outdoors.

We have beautiful outdoor places, but we also have long, sunny days with high ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure. UV exposure contributes significantly to Queensland having one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world (AIHW, 2016).



Cool and covered

Skin cancer prevention is easy by staying cool and covered with:

- Wide brim hat shading the head and neck.
- Clothing that protects the skin with a longer sleeve, collar and covering for the legs.
- Sunglasses to protect the eyes: look for the Australian Standard AS1067 on the swing tag and choose a style which fits well to protect the side of the eye too.
- Apply sunscreen on exposed skin. Choose an SPF 30 or higher, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen. Apply 20 minutes before going outside and reapply every two hours – or more regularly if swimming or sweating. Apply sunscreen thickly, at a rate of a teaspoon per limb, head and neck.
- Don't rely on sunscreen as your only form of sun protection cover up with clothing, hats, sunglasses too.



Hints

CLOTHING

- Clothing and hats with a closeweave fabric reduce the UV radiation exposure.
- Hats with lining under the brim are useful to provide more protection.
 Avoid styles with holes that let the UV through.
- A simple test is to hold the fabric to the light. If you can see light through, it means some UV can see through as well.
- Wear loose, flowing styles and select natural weave cloth such as cotton to stay cool.

LOCATIONS

- Choosing shady locations can help you stay cool and covered.
 Plan your outdoor activities around shady locations like parks, walking tracks and other community spaces.
- Choosing a protective location includes being aware of UV radiation from the sun reflecting up under shade. Be aware of reflective, light coloured surfaces such as concrete, sand or water.
- Sometimes shade structures are angled in a way that may not provide shade when you need it. Think about the time of day you will be using the shade.

- Look for places with combinations of natural shade, from trees and shrubs, and built shade.
- Shade cloth can still let UV through, especially if it has large gaps or an open weave.
- Plan ahead and take your own shade – such as personal umbrellas or portable shade structures – if outdoors for an extended time.
- Hold the umbrella to the light to make sure it has a closely-woven fabric. Some umbrellas have a UPF rating, meaning it has been tested for UV protection.



Age friendly spaces

Some simple hints for choosing age friendly spaces:

- Plan ahead for transport and access options.
- Are there wide flat footpaths?
- Is there adequate seating?
- Is the seating shaded and is it comfortable e.g. does it have arm rests?

- Are there public toilets that older people can easily use?
- Seek safe and supportive built environments and landscapes to enable older people to participate and be engaged in the community.

Handy websites

Queensland Government : Queensland An Age Friendly Community

https://www.communities.qld.gov.au/seniors/queensland-age-friendly-community

Queensland Health: Sun safety and skin cancer

https://www.qld.gov.au/health/staying-healthy/environmental/sun

Queensland Health: Shade and sun safety in public facilities

https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/industry-environment/environment-land-water/shade





Disclaimer

Information contained in this document is of a general nature only, and not intended to replace medical advice and any questions regarding a medical diagnosis or treatment should be directed to a medical practitioner.

References

ARPANSA (2015) ARPANSA Fact Sheet – Sun protection using shade

https://www.arpansa.gov.au/sites/g/files/net3086/f/legacy/pubs/factsheets/SunProtectionUsingShade.pdf

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2016) Skin Cancer in Australia. Cat. no. CAN 96 Canberra: AIHW.

Cancer Council Australia Preventing skin cancer

https://www.cancer.org.au/preventing-cancer/sun-protection/preventing-skin-cancer/accessed 20/07/2018.

Queensland Government

Queensland : an age friendly community Strategic Direction Statement

https://www.communities.qld.gov.au/resources/dcdss/seniors/age-friendly-community/qld-an-age-friendly-community.pdf

Queensland Government (2017) Queensland: an age friendly community toolkit Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors

https://www.communities.qld.gov.au/resources/dcdss/seniors/age-friendly-community/qld-age-friendly-toolkit.pdf

Stoneham, M, Earl, C, Baldwin L (2007) Creating Shade at Public Facilities: Policy Guidelines for Local Government 2nd Edition AIEH: Brisbane.

Think about the time of day you are outside. Can you reschedule to earlier in the morning or later in the afternoon? Be aware that the UV index in Queensland can peak year round, meaning sun protection every day is required.





The QUT Cool and Covered program is a research initiative of QUT.

To support our research contact us at coolandcovered@qut.edu.au