

**T**AKE THE SUN'S STRONGER SUMMER RAYS and combine them with more time spent outdoors in lighter, more revealing clothing and you've got the perfect storm for a sunburn, which inevitably leads to premature aging (wrinkles, hyperpigmentation, loss of elasticity)—not to mention an increased risk of skin cancer. And with over 80,000 cases diagnosed in Canada each year, it's essential to keep skin protection top of mind.

**ALL THE ACRONYMS**

"UVB rays lead to sunburn, but UVAs penetrate the skin more deeply and are associated with more long-term UV damage and skin cancer development," says Dr. Sandy Skotnicki, dermatologist and assistant professor at the University of Toronto. She notes, however, that both types of rays are important risk factors when it comes to skin cancer. "UVAs are present throughout the year at the same intensity, even when it's cloudy," says Holly Thaggard, founder of sunscreen brand Supergoop!. That's why sunscreens need to protect skin from both kinds of rays, even though the SPF—sun protection factor—number only pertains to UVB protection. To ensure you're getting a sunscreen that provides adequate UVA protection, says Nour Dayeh, who has a Ph.D. in biomedical sciences and is the medical communications manager at La Roche-Posay and Dermablend, you should choose one that has "broad spectrum" and the

UVA logo (the letters "UVA" in a circle) on the label; this logo indicates that a product respects Health Canada's requirement that it contain a level of UVA protection that's equivalent to at least one-third of its SPF.

**THE RIGHT SUNSCREEN**

The general recommendation is to reach for a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a minimum SPF of 30; there are plenty of options that fit these criteria and cater to every preference and skin type. "Chemical" (or "organic") sunscreens tend to have a lighter texture with a clear finish and absorb UV rays by turning them into heat, whereas "mineral" (sometimes called "physical" or "inorganic") sunscreens work by reflecting the rays and absorbing some as well. Mineral sunscreens are often recommended for those with sensitive skin as they're less likely to cause allergic reactions and irritation. But when it comes to finding the right formula, the best sunscreen is the one you'll use consistently. "The biggest challenge when it comes to sun protection is compliance, so we recommend focusing on textures that suit your skin type and everyday needs," says Dayeh. And if you have skin that doesn't burn readily, that doesn't mean you can afford to skimp on sunscreen. "While those with darker skin tones may be less likely to burn from UVB rays, it's still important to protect from UVAs," says Thaggard. The bottom line? Everyone, regardless of skin tone, should be wearing sunscreen—period. >



1. AlumierMD Sheer Hydration Broad Spectrum SPF 40 (\$48, [alumiermd.ca](http://alumiermd.ca)). 2. Supergoop! Glowscreen SPF 40 (\$48, [sephora.ca](http://sephora.ca)). 3. Ren Skincare Clean Screen Mineral SPF 30 Mattifying Face Sunscreen (\$47, [renskincare.com](http://renskincare.com)). 4. Lotus Aroma Daily Sunscreen Face SPF 30 (\$29, [lotusaroma.com](http://lotusaroma.com)). 5. Ombrelle Face Mineral Hydrating Lotion Sunscreen SPF 50 (\$14, [garnier.ca](http://garnier.ca)). 6. Olay Regenerist Mineral Hydrating Moisturizer SPF 30 (\$40, [olay.ca](http://olay.ca)). 7. Clarins UV 50 Sunscreen Multi-Protection Tint (\$44, [clarins.ca](http://clarins.ca)).