

Action Kit for Meteorologists

Don't Fry Day

Friday, May 25, 2012



Don't Fry Day – Spreading the Message

The National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention (National Council), which includes the American Cancer Society, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), among other organizations, is proud to sponsor the fourth annual *Don't Fry Day* campaign. *Don't Fry Day* falls on the Friday before Memorial Day (Friday, May 25, 2012). As millions of us enjoy the great outdoors on Memorial Day weekend and throughout the summer, the National Council reminds Americans to practice sun-safe behaviors. *Don't Fry Day* is a great opportunity for meteorologists nationwide to help reduce rising rates of skin cancer by promoting sun-safe behaviors. This Action Kit for broadcast meteorologists provides statistics, talking points, sound bites, and tweets you can use to educate the public about skin cancer prevention and connect the public with *Don't Fry Day* 2012.

You are in a unique position to educate your viewers about how to be safe in the sun. You are a celebrity where you live – and a trusted resource, the station scientist. Join the National Council for *Don't Fry Day* and you'll provide an important public service, add variety and value to your broadcast and website, and earn even more respect – and dedicated viewers.

Like the temperature, wind speed, and precipitation, ultraviolet radiation (UV) from the sun is an important weather element that fluctuates on a daily basis; yet is not commonly mentioned in broadcast weather reports. Due to the potentially harmful impact of UV radiation on skin and eyes, you are in a prime position to improve your viewers' health and safety by making them aware of the UV Index as part of your report. You will provide a much-needed service by reminding viewers to take appropriate action to stay safe in the sun.

Why Do Your Viewers Really Need Your Help on This Issue?

- Whether from the sun or an artificial source, ultraviolet radiation is a proven human carcinogen.
- Each year in the U.S., there are more new cases of skin cancer than new cases of breast, prostate, lung and colon cancer COMBINED.
- One in five Americans will develop skin cancer at some point in their lives.
- The incidence of many common cancers is falling, but the incidence of melanoma continues to rise significantly, at a rate faster than that of any of the seven most common cancers.
- Melanoma is the second most common form of cancer for young adults ages 15 – 29.
- Melanoma is the most common form of cancer for young adults ages 25 – 29.
- Up to 90 percent of visible changes to the skin commonly thought to be caused by aging are actually caused by sun exposure.
- Skin cancer is one of the most preventable forms of cancer.

- Your skin is your body's largest organ and is susceptible to irreversible damage from UV radiation. Protect your skin on *Don't Fry Day* and every day.
- While you're outside being active and taking care of your heart and your lungs, don't forget to take care of your body's largest organ – your skin!

If you are looking for compelling statistics for your state, the EPA has state-specific skin cancer fact sheets for 25 states at www.epa.gov/sunwise/statefacts.html, with more to come.

Besides being presented on-air, this information can also be provided on your station's website, with a link to the *Don't Fry Day* website SkinCancerPrevention.org for additional information.

Actions You Can Take:

1. Broadcast the UV Index in your daily forecast.

The UV Index, provided by the National Weather Service and EPA, provides a daily forecast of the expected risk of overexposure to the sun. The public relies on your forecasts for valuable information to plan their outdoor activities and will appreciate the UV intensity information that helps them to protect their health. For information on adding the UV Index to your website, visit: <http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/uviresources.html>

2. Provide information on the UV Index application for Smartphones.

The UV Index app provides Americans with a new way to check the sun's intensity and plan outdoor activities accordingly by providing users mobile access to the daily UV Index forecast for their area. The UV Index predicts intensity levels on a scale of 1 to 11+, where 1 indicates a low risk of overexposure and 11+ signifies an extreme risk. The forecast is calculated by the National Weather Service for thousands of points across the U.S., and EPA's app uses the GPS capability of Smartphones to display the UV Index forecast tailored to the user's location.

3. Demonstrate the EPA's free UV Index Smartphone apps on air and ask your viewers to download and use them.

The UV Index app is available to download onto your iPhone, Android, Blackberry, or any Web-enabled phone. Go to: www.epa.gov/enviro/mobile to download the app.

4. Talk about the importance of protecting your skin and eyes during your broadcast, especially in the weeks leading up to *Don't Fry Day*.

On *Don't Fry Day* & every day, remember Slip! Slop! Slap!® & Wrap! Slip on a shirt; slop on broad-spectrum sunscreen SPF 30+; slap on a wide-brimmed hat; & wrap on sunglasses.

- If you're headed to the beach, a festival, water-skiing or other outdoor activities this weekend, check the UV Index forecast on the EPA's website. You can download the UV Index app for your smart phone from www.epa.gov/enviro/mobile.
- Remember, if you'll be on the water, you are exposed to even more UV rays from the reflection – whether at the beach from the sand or while boating. UV radiation is not just coming from above but also from below.
- It does not have to be a hot day to get burned.
- The higher up you are, the more UV exposure you're getting.
- Have fun in the sun, while keeping your skin and your eyes safe!
- If you get sunburned today, you won't want to go out again tomorrow. Protect yourself.

- You work hard for the weekend – you’ll enjoy it a lot more if you’re not sunburned.
- Keep sunscreen where it's easy to grab when you need it - in your car, your backpack, or even in your pocket with new single-use packs.
- Did you know that many melanomas are caught by a partner? So watch each other’s backs for any skin changes.
- Wear a shirt and other protective clothing when gardening, running, mowing the lawn, or walking the dog.

5. Consider an On-air Demonstration

EPA’s SunWise program is a free national environmental and health education program that teaches children and their caregivers how to be safe in the sun through the use of classroom, school, and community-based components.

Take the *Don’t Fry Day* pledge, http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/dfdpledge_meteor.html, and receive a UV-sensitive Frisbee and SunWise kit for meteorologists to use in an on-air Frisbee demonstration:

- Cover the SunWise UV Frisbee with a clear shower cap, and apply some broad-spectrum SPF 30 sunscreen to one area.
- Take the Frisbee outside. Point out how the white Frisbee gets darker in reaction to the sun, but that the area covered with sunscreen stays white.
- Relate this reaction to how our skin is affected when exposed to the sun.
- Briefly discuss the UV Index and how it can be used to plan outdoor activities to avoid overexposure to the sun.
- See Meteorologist Paul Gross’ video on UV Damage for additional ideas on how to use the UV Frisbee: www.ametsoc.org/stationscientist/videos.html

6. Get Schools Involved!

If you live in an area where schools close before Memorial Day, then “Spring into *Don’t Fry Day*” by starting activities in spring.

a. Have a Student Do the Day’s Weather Forecast

- Invite students from a local SunWise school to visit the television station.
- Have students present part of the weather forecast, including reporting what the UV Index is for that day.
- Have the students explain what the UV Index is, and what factors influence it on any particular day (e.g., cloud cover, reflection off water or snow, time of day).
- Students should discuss appropriate SunWise Action Steps for that day, taking into account the UV Index level.

b. Get your local school involved in the *Don’t Fry Day* pledge.

Check out: <http://epa.gov/sunwise/dfdpledge.html>

c. Promote the SunWise with SHADE Poster Contest.

Students in grades K-8 are eligible to enter the contest, which is an effort to teach children ways to protect their skin and eyes from too much sun exposure. Contest entries are due by April 1 for two age categories: kindergarten through third grade, and fourth through eighth grade. Winning posters receive state and national prizes, with the overall national winner

receiving a family trip to Disney World and a shade structure for his/her school. Check out www.shadefoundation.org for details about the poster contest.

d. Visit a local school.

Take the *Don't Fry Day* pledge, http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/dfdpledge_meteor.html, and receive a free UV-sensitive Frisbee and SunWise kit for meteorologists. The SunWise Frisbee is a great tool for a hands-on demonstration of the effects of UV radiation.

7. Use Social Media.

Ask your viewers to:

- Become a fan of *Don't Fry Day*.
- Follow *Don't Fry Day* on Twitter, @DontFryDay.
- Blog with you and post their comments.

Actions You Can Take

Follow *Don't Fry Day* on Twitter, @DontFryDay and either re-tweet our messages or post your own tweets. Below are some examples of tweets you can use to raise awareness about *Don't Fry Day* and the importance of sun safety (many more can be found at skincancerprevention.org):

- Find out more about *Don't Fry Day* at SkinCancerPrevention.org
- The Friday before Memorial Day is *Don't Fry Day*: Protect Your Skin Today & Every Day.
- On *Don't Fry Day* & every day, apply sunscreen & reapply every 2 hours! Use a palm-full to cover exposed skin.
- On *Don't Fry Day* & every day, seek shade between 10am - 4pm when the sun's UV rays are the strongest.
- Educate your family and friends about being smart in the sun. Blog about *Don't Fry Day*.
- On *Don't Fry Day* & every day, remember the shadow rule when in the sun: Watch Your Shadow. No Shadow, Seek Shade!
- For *Don't Fry Day*, check out all kinds of free resources at SkinCancerPrevention.org.
- On *Don't Fry Day* & every day, embrace your beautiful, natural skin color & protect your skin from too much sun.
- On *Don't Fry Day* & every day, get your vitamin D safely from food and supplements & protect your skin from harmful UV rays.
- On *Don't Fry Day* & every day, improving your sun protection at any age reduces your risk of skin cancer.
- On *Don't Fry Day* & every day, remember that your natural skin tone offers very limited sun protection, so wear SPF 30+ when outdoors.
- On *Don't Fry Day* & every day, you can still get a sunburn in the car, so apply sunscreen if spending long periods of time in the car.
- *Don't Fry Day*: reminding you to seek the shade, not the sun.
- On *Don't Fry Day*, do your skin a favor & cover up.
- *Don't Fry Day*: reminding you that tan today = wrinkled tomorrow.
- Celebrate *Don't Fry Day* today & every day by wearing sunscreen, covering up, & seeking the shade!

Other Actions You Can Take

Write a blog to raise awareness about *Don't Fry Day* and the importance of sun safety and encourage your viewers to post their comments. People like blogs because people and not corporations write them. Below are a few tips for writing a blog post:

- Write less. Give the maximum amount of information with the least amount of words.
- Make headlines snappy. Contain your whole argument in your headline.
- Litter the post with Keywords. – *Don't Fry Day*, skin cancer prevention, UV Index, sun safety
- Link like crazy. Support your post with links to SkinCancerPrevention.org and your UV Index web page.
- Make your opinion known. They want to know what you think.

Additional Information and Facts**a. Travel Tips**

- When you're checking the weather for a trip, remember to check the UV Index too, and plan accordingly.
- Are your kids headed off to outdoor camp? Check that the outdoor camp counselors or lifeguards are SunWise certified (<http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/tutorial.html>).

b. Vital Sun Safety-Related Items to Pack to Protect You and Your Loved Ones

- A wide-brimmed hat
- A broad-spectrum sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor of 30 or higher (in your checked luggage if you are travelling via airline)
- Sunglasses
- SPF 30+ lip balm
- An umbrella
- Long-sleeved, light-weight shirts and pants
- A list of museums/other indoor sites to visit during the sun's peak UV hours (between 10 and 4)

c. Helpful Hints:**Wear Protective Clothing**

What you decide to wear can dramatically affect the levels of UV radiation you are exposed to. Wide-brimmed hats that cover the ears and back of the neck are the best, though baseball hats are better than nothing. Long sleeves and pants provide extra protection as well, though keep in mind UV radiation will still penetrate thin, loosely-woven material.

Seek Shade

Seek shade when you can, remembering that the sun's UV rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Remember the shadow rule when outside: Watch your shadow: short shadow; seek shade!

Generously Apply Sunscreen

Generously apply sunscreen to all exposed skin using an SPF of at least 30 that provides broad-spectrum protection from both ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) rays. Reapply every two hours, even on cloudy days, and more frequently when swimming or sweating.

Check the UV Index

The UV Index provides important information to help you plan your outdoor activities in ways that prevent overexposure to the sun. Visit the EPA's SunWise website, <http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html>, to sign up to receive the daily UV Index, look up your UV Index or download the UV Index widget and free Smartphone application.

Use Extra Caution Near Water, Snow and Sand

Water, snow and sand reflect the damaging rays of the sun, which can increase your chance of sunburn.

Get Vitamin D Safely

Get vitamin D safely through a diet that includes vitamin supplements and foods fortified with Vitamin D. Don't seek the sun.

d. Don't Fry Day Resource Listing

A variety of resources are available for free on the National Council on Skin Cancer Prevention's website: <http://www.skincancerprevention.org/node/282?q=programs/dont-fry-day/resources>

Thanks in advance for helping to spread the message of sun safety on *Don't Fry Day* and everyday!