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Shopping for sunscreen? The Environmental Working Group's (EWG) newly released 2011 sunscreen guide can help you make smart decisions. This research and advocacy group recommends a mere 20 percent of the 600-plus beach and sport sunscreens it evaluated. To score high marks in the rankings, a product must be effective -- adequately protect skin from both UVA (which causes premature aging, skin cancer, and other skin damage) and UVB (which causes sunburn) rays. It must also be safe, meaning free of potentially harmful chemicals.

The 2011 products to avoid list contains some popular brands. EWG's Sunscreens to Avoid:

- Aveeno Active Naturals Hydrosport Sunblock Spray, SPF 85
- Aveeno Sunblock Spray, Continuous Protection, SPF 70
- Banana Boat Kids UltraMist Sunscreen, SPF 110
- Banana Boat Kids UltraMist Sunscreen, SPF 85
- Banana Boat Sport Performance Active Max Protect Continuous Spray Sunscreen, SPF 110
- Banana Boat Ultra Defense UltraMist Sunscreen Continuous Clear Spray, SPF 85
- CVSExtreme Sport Clear Mist Sunscreen Spray, SPF 70+
- CVS Sheer Mist Sunscreen Spray, SPF 70
- Neutrogena Fresh Cooling Sunblock Lotion, Body Mist, SPF 70
- Neutrogena Spectrum+ Sunblock Spray, SPF 100
- Neutrogena Ultimate Sport Sunblock Spray, SPF 100+
- Neutrogena Ultimate Sport Sunblock Spray, SPF 70
- Neutrogena Ultra Sheer Body Mist Sunblock Lotion, SPF 100+
- Neutrogena Ultra Sheer Body Mist Sunblock Lotion, SPF 70
- Neutrogena Wet Skin Kids Sunblock Spray, SPF 70
- Neutrogena Wet Skin Sunblock Spray, SPF 85
- Walgreens Sheer Body Mist Sunscreen, SPF 70

How did EWG come up with this list? Each of the products to avoid meets all of these criteria:

- SPF values above 50-plus. Higher SPF products are not necessarily best. In fact, the Food and Drug Administration says these numbers can be misleading. There's a concern that high SPF products may give people a false sense of security and encourage people to stay out in the sun for too long without reapplying sunscreen. It's also important to note that the SPF is based solely on UVB protection.
- Sunscreen sprays. They can fill the air with tiny particles that may not be safe to breathe in, according to EWG.
- Contains oxybenzone and vitamin A. Oxybenzone is a concern because it penetrates the skin, is associated with allergic reactions, and is a potential hormone disruptor. Retinyl palmitate is a form of vitamin A that may not be safe when exposed to sunlight. EWG recommends choosing products with one of these ingredients instead: zinc, titanium dioxide, avobenzone, or Mexoryl SX.

Which products does EWG recommend? Here's a list of its best beach and sport sunscreens.

Unfortunately, some of the safest and most effective sunscreens on store shelves can be expensive so it's worthwhile to shop around for deals. Here are the most affordable products that performed well in EWG's ratings (calculated by Yahoo! based on price per ounce).

Safer, Affordable Sunscreens:

- Alba Botanica Sun: Mineral Sunscreen Fragrance Free, SPF 30
- Alba Botanical Sun: Mineral Sunscreen Kids, SPF 30
- Aubrey Organics Natural Sun Saving Face Sunscreen, SPF 15
- All Terrain Aquasport Performance Sunscreen, SPF 30
- All Terrain KidSport Sunscreen, SPF 30
- BabyGanics Cover Up Baby Sunscreen for Face & Body, Fragrance Free, SPF 50+
- Carribean Solutions Natural/Biodegradable SolGuard, SPF 25
- Carribean Solutions Sol Kid Kare Natural Sunscreen, SPF 25
- Earth's Best: Sunblock Mineral Based, SPF 30+
- Goddess Garden Kids

Sunscreens to avoid

Friday, 27 May 2011 06:13 - Last Updated Friday, 27 May 2011 06:16

Natural Sunscreen, SPF 30+
◆◆◆ Goddess Garden Natural Sunscreen, SPF 30+
◆◆◆ Jason Natural Cosmetics Sunbrellas: Mineral Natural Sunblock, SPF 30
◆◆◆ Johnson & Johnson's Baby Daily Face & Body Lotion, SPF 40
◆◆◆ Mexitan Products Sunscreen Lotion, SPF 50 and SPF 30
◆◆◆ MelanSol Natural Sunscreen for Face and Body, SPF 25
◆◆◆ Nature's Gate Mineral Sportblock, SPF 20
◆◆◆ Purple Prairie Botanicals SunStuff, SPF 30
◆◆◆ Solbar Zinc Protection Cream, SPF 38
◆◆◆ Sunbow Dora the Explorer Pink Sunscreen, SPF 30
◆◆◆ Tropical Sands All Natural Sunscreen, SPF 50 and SPF 30
◆◆◆ Vanicream Sunscreen for Sensitive Skin, SPF 30
◆◆◆ Vanicream Sunscreen Sport, SPF 35

<div align="justify">EWG also includes ratings for best moisturizers, lip balms, and makeup with SPF.

It's worth noting that using sunscreen is only one part of smart sun protection. Limit your time outside in the middle of the day when the sun's rays are most intense. Wear a hat, sunglasses, and protective clothing (dark and tightly-woven). Get more sun safety tips from EWG.

Source:
<http://shine.yahoo.com/event/momentsofmotherhood/sunscreens-to-avoid-2488130/></div>