

Health Reflections



SOMESCREAM!

Welcome to Heulfryn, the sunny spot in north Wales where I run my homeopathy clinic. Here, I encourage healthy attitudes and sustainable medicine for children, teenagers, adults and elders, come rain or shine.

This week, however, I took a day off to visit a local festival. It was also attended by representatives of a health charity handing out sachets of sunscreen, hence today's topic.

My first instinct, as with any cosmetic or food, was to read the ingredients list. Concerns seem to be growing about the safety of many brands, particularly when considered in relation to the susceptibilities of users. If you personally feel this worth exploring further, I recommend starting with the Sun Safety Campaign at www.EWG.org.

The topic of sunscreen is loaded and emotive, no doubt. I have friends and patients who have heard warnings about sun exposure leading to skin cancer, and who slap on the sunblock in collective fear. Thankfully my job is not to scaremonger, but to champion informed choice-making and to get the living daylight and all its health benefits back *into* you, if you so wish.

NUTRITION In *Why I Eat My Sunscreen to Protect Skin From the Inside Out*, Katie Wells writes "I've long been fed up with the ingredients in sunscreen and believe it often does more harm than good. The more I researched the more I found that exposure to the sun isn't a problem (it's actually a benefit) if you feed your skin the right nutrients to get it ready for skin exposure."

Nurse Amy Mihaly echoes such concerns. She explains how sunscreen might not only hinder our ability to make use of sunlight as part of the process of transforming

cholesterol into precious Vitamin D, but also "adds more toxins to your skin and blocks the detox pathways."

ENTER FRIENDLY FATS Wells and Mihaly are both proponents of including old-fashioned fats in the diet, and are not alone in their observations of increased resistance to sunburn in people who choose to follow a traditional diet or a GAPS™ path to healing.

Making friends with tallow, fish, goose fat and coconut oil seems to be a wise move for those wishing to reduce all sorts of inflammation. They provide the immune system with building blocks for growth, repair and resilience, and it is within this context of good nutrition, including traditional sources of cholesterol, that Dr Campbell-McBride encourages safe and regular family sunbathing.

But there's nothing new under that old sun. Ancient civilizations seemed to enjoy rich cultural affinities with it, with sacred alignments and deities reflecting a sense of innate connection. In using sunblock, might we be fundamentally severing this relationship? Might sunscreen symbolise a vilification of a life-giving star? Should we perhaps question the suncream habit as contributing to some auto-immune pattern on spiritual and planetary levels?

Resuming summer festivities, let's reclaim our solar citizenship and look into the health benefits of sunshine. Let's do it sensibly, without burning, equipped nutritionally from the inside out. And if you don't wish to ditch the suncream altogether, do consider using a brand with the least harmful ingredients possible.

Finally, I love Sheldrake's reminder of how "children implicitly think the sun is conscious, and draw it with a smiley face." Let's drop the fear and rekindle the joy.

THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK ♥ READ BEFORE YOU THINK*

Why I Eat My Sunscreen to Protect Skin From the Inside Out, Katie Wells (www.wellnessmama.com - last accessed July 2019);
Sunburn Resistance Through Diet, Graham Ballachey (www.sustainablebalance.ca – last accessed July 2019);
Science and Spiritual Practices – Reconnecting through Direct Experience, Rupert Sheldrake (Coronet, 2017);
The Trouble With Ingredients in Sunscreens, EWG (www.ewg.org - last accessed July 2019);
Notes From a GAPS Practitioner, Amy Mihaly (What If Publishing, 2016);
Gut and Psychology Syndrome, Natasha Campbell-McBride (Medinform, 2010).

*Fran Lebowitz - Social Studies

ACUTE HOMEOPATHIC REMEDIES TO CONSIDER AFTER ACCIDENTAL SUNBURN

*Sunburn is NEVER ideal.
ALWAYS take precautionary steps to avoid it.*

In the unfortunate event of sunburn, select a single homeopathic remedy and let it dissolve on the tongue.

Be sure to match the frequency of administration to the intensity of pain, heat and swelling. One pillule every hour could be a good starting guide, then reduce the frequency as the patient starts to feel better.

Cantharis 30c or 200c A top consideration for burns of all sorts, especially if blistering and feeling raw. If sunburn also feels better on application of something cold, Cantharis is well indicated.

Belladonna 30c or 200c For when skin is violently hot and red, with a burning and throbbing sensation. The patient's pupils might be wide open, the pulse strong and fast with possible signs of sunstroke too.

Apis 30c or 200c The Apis-type skin will have a puffy appearance together with a burning and stinging feeling. Drowsiness and irritability may both be present at the same time. An Apis state is not as hot as Belladonna.

Urtica urens 30c or 200c Choose this remedy if sunburn is experienced as stinging or prickling with awful itchiness. Cold bathing aggravates, quite unlike Cantharis.

If none of the above remedies match your situation, contact your family homeopath or Homeopathic Helpline (09065 343 404). Depending on country and local legislations there are many more remedies such as Glonoine and Sol that may be considered. Once recovered, you may wish to reassess your diet with a view to reducing your personal risk of sunburn in future.

In any case of severe burn, or in the presence of very high fever, fast pulse, confusion, headache or nausea, seek prompt medical advice.



Here is the tale of the wind and the sun, and how they settled a pretty hot debate.

The wind, you see, was a boastful character, and one day pronounced himself the stronger of the two. The more prudent sun watched on as the wind tried to prove superiority.

“Do you see that man down there?” asked the wind.

“I bet that with my strength, I could blow off his coat with a single blast!”

But the wind's gusty attempt only made the man secure his coat more tightly.

Then came the sun's turn. It shone brightly, transforming the blustery spell into a gloriously warm day. Soon, the man loosened his collar, wiped his brow and – you guessed it - took off his coat.

The sun had a certain style! If you managed to catch it, you probably understand that the art of reading a person and of treating them with a considered gentleness can be more powerful than severing force. What a good philosophy for healthcare, too.

For more wise tales, check out Orchard's book of *Aesop's Fables* by Michael Morpurgo and Emma Clark (2014) and the Penguin Classic, *Aesop – the Complete Fables* by Robert Temple (1998).

Go gentle. Go strong. Go well.



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AUDE SAPERE – MENTRA WYBOD – DARE TO GET IT

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