

# SUNSCREEN

by Elizabeth Schaefer-Fokas

Throughout history different native people from around the globe have used local natural plant products to help protect their skin from the damaging effects of the sun. Products such as olive oil, rice, water weeds, and other plants were used successfully. Within the last 60 years, chemists have produced sunscreen to block the cancer-causing UVA & UVB rays of the sun. Unfortunately, rather than using natural ingredients these chemists have used highly processed and synthetic products that may have other effects on the human body and even on our environment.

One of the important ingredients in most sunscreens is zinc oxide. Researchers at Missouri University of Science and Technology tested zinc oxide by exposing it to sunlight. They determined that under sun exposure it causes a chemical reaction that releases free radicals which can have adverse effects on our skin and even cause damage to the DNA in human skin. Ultimately the sunscreen that you wear to prevent skin cancer can actually be causing skin cancer.

Another effect of wearing sunscreen is that it limits your skin's exposure to the sun, which helps your body to produce Vitamin D3. This vitamin helps your immune system, cardiovascular system, brain and muscles function at its best. If you continually wear sunscreen while outside it is important to obtain Vitamin D3 in other ways, such as through supplements.

Sunscreen has also had an adverse effect on the environment. While on vacation with my family in Mexico, we were advised to not use traditional store-bought sunscreens while snorkeling. The sunscreens were known to have a negative effect on the coral reef and sea life. This led me to wonder if it could also have negative effects on humans.

The Young Living company now offers a Mineral Sunscreen Lotion that is both safe for humans and for the environment. There are also safe alternative homemade recipes that can be used, similar to those used throughout history. Coconut oil is known to be an effective and natural ingredient for sunscreen. Adding a bottle of Young Living's Carrot Seed Oil and 40 drops of Myrrh Oil is suggested by many who love to enjoy the sunshine while also respecting their bodies and the environment as a whole.