ASK DR. HODGE
(Sunscreens)

Q: WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR IN A SUNSCREEN?

Dr. Hodge: Look for the words "Broad-Spectrum" because that means the sunscreen protects against not only UVB rays but also UVA rays. UVA rays are long wavelength rays that go through clouds and window glass and lead to the destruction of collagen and elastic fibers in your skin. The best UVA blocker is zinc oxide, but titanium dioxide is good too. So make sure the ingredients of your sunscreen include zinc oxide, titanium dioxide, or both. (Zinc oxide and titanium dioxide used to be white and pasty, but new, high quality sunscreens use micronized particles so that the sunscreen is invisible when rubbed in.) If you expect to be in the water or to do a lot of sweating, then you should look for the words "water resistant." Sunscreens with an SPF over 30 don't offer that much additional protection but they may stay on longer. Most importantly, look for a sunscreen that is easy to apply and feels good because that makes it more likely that you will use it!

Q: WHAT SUNSCREENS DO YOU USE?

Dr. Hodge: For my face, I like SkinMedica's TNS Daily Moisturizer. It's a "moisturizer" but it's also a broad-spectrum SPF 20 sunscreen that contains antioxidants and human growth agents to promote collagen growth. It's the most elegant feeling sunscreen I've ever used. A terrific (and less expensive) option that I often use is elta MD's UV Facial Broad-Spectrum SPF 30+. It also is moisturizing and has a great feel. And then sometimes I use elta MD's UV Daily Broad Spectrum SPF 40 because it's tinted and can substitute for a light foundation.

For all over use, I like elta MD's UV Lotion Broad-Spectrum SPF30+. It comes in a pump container, goes on easily, and feels great.

If I need something that is water resistant but has a light feel, I use elta MD's UV Physical Broad-Spectrum SPF 41. (This lightly tinted "physical" sunscreen does not depend on any chemical reactions to work, so I often recommend it to people who are allergic to or sensitive about the use of "chemicals.")

If I'm playing tennis, swimming, or going to the beach, I use Blue Lizard Australian Sunscreen Broad Spectrum SPF 30+. It is by far the most water resistant sunscreen I have ever used. Considering how water resistant it is, it spreads well and rubs in completely. Both my sons swam and played water polo when they were younger. They used Blue Lizard exclusively.

Q: WHAT SUNSCREENS DOES MR. HODGE USE?

Dr. Hodge: Mr. Hodge follows a more simple regimen. He uses elta MD's UV Lotion Broad-Spectrum SPF30+ on his face and body and thinks it feels great. And if he needs a water resistant sunscreen he uses Blue Lizard Australian Sunscreen Broad Spectrum SPF 30+. (If you like to keep things simple, this is a great regimen.)

(cont. on back)
**Q: WHAT OTHER SUNSCREENS DOES DR. HODGE RECOMMEND?**

- Dr. Hodge believes that all the chemicals used in the sunscreens she recommends are completely safe, but sometimes people are understandably concerned about putting "chemicals" on their skin. In these cases she recommends *elta MD's UV Physical Broad-Spectrum SPF 41*. The word "physical" refers to the fact that it only uses ingredients (zinc oxide and titanium dioxide) to physically reflect UV rays. The UV protection does not depend on a chemical reaction. Because the formulation contains both zinc oxide and titanium dioxide, a very light tint is added to the sunscreen to make it easier to "rub in" completely. This is a great all-around sunscreen because it is also water resistant. (If you want a "physical" sunscreen but don't want even a very light tint or if you want to be consistent in your use of SkinMedica products, then she recommends *SkinMedica's Daily Physical Defense Sunscreen (Broad Spectrum SPF30+)*.

- For patients whose skin is somewhat "angry" because of acne or other conditions and for patients that are post-procedure, Dr. Hodge recommends *elta MD's UV Clear Broad-Spectrum SPF 46* because it contains ingredients that calm the skin.

- Some people really like spray sunscreens and feel like they're easier to use. Dr. Hodge knows from experience that "the best sunscreen is the one people actually put on." *elta MD's UV AERO Broad-Spectrum SPF 45* is the best water resistant spray sunscreen she has found.

- Some patients, usually men, don't want anything remotely creamy and will only use a sunscreen if it feels very light and goes on like an aftershave lotion. In this case, *La Roche-Posay's Anthelios 60* is a good choice.

- And for your lips, Dr. Hodge recommends *elta MD's UV Lip Balm Broad-Spectrum SPF 31*. It's moisturizing, water-resistant, contains zinc oxide, feels good and even tastes good.

- It's not technically a "sunscreen," but Dr. Hodge recommends the use of *Heliocare* on days when a lot of sun exposure is expected. Heliocare is a tablet taken orally once a day that provides antioxidants that help mop up the damage caused by UV radiation. You can think of it as sun protection that works from the inside, but it is not a substitute for a traditional sunscreen. Heliocare gives you a second line of defense.

**USE A SUNSCREEN EVERY DAY!!!**

Especially because we live in California, Dr. Hodge recommends that you use a sunscreen every day, even on days when you don't plan to be outside very much. Most of the sunscreens Dr. Hodge recommends have significant moisturizing properties which are helpful to our skin regardless of sun exposure. More importantly, the cumulative UV dose we get living in California just carrying out our daily routines is much more than you might think.

Dr. Hodge likes to always emphasize that sun protection is more important than ever following a chemical peel, LASER, or other procedure because your skin is temporarily missing part of its natural defenses.

And finally, remember that effective sun protection also includes hats, sunglasses, and protective clothing.