

Make 2013 Your Best Year

Women's Health

*Michelle Bridges Will
Max Your Fitness - Fast*

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ARMS!**

**TIGHT
BUM!**

**FLAT
STOMACH!**

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No more SPF *excuses!*

Don't fret, we all do it – but now a new generation of protectors has arrived

By Karina Giglio and Caelia Corse

a Attention please: Jennifer Aniston now reportedly uses sunscreen. Stop the press! We figure that if she can fit it in (between providing excellent fodder for tabloids and braiding Courtney Cox's hair) you can too. Right?

Well, apparently not. Between 95 and 99 per cent of the 444,000 cases of skin cancer diagnosed in Australia are caused by exposure to the sun, and yet more than 1 in 10 Aussie women still report getting sunburnt on the weekend. What the? Let us guess why: "Sunscreen is too greasy." Or maybe "it stings". Or perhaps "the dog ate it"? We get it – at *WH* HQ we've been known to sport the lobster look, too. It's time to stop making excuses. New textures, advanced ingredients and genius technology solve the faults of old-school sunscreens. Here's a few to try:

Blanket approach

EXCUSE

"It runs into my eyes when I work out"

It can happen - but not with every form of sunscreen.

No-excuses fix Wax on! A waxy stick has polymers that latch onto the skin so your sun protection stays put, even through sweaty sessions. Apply a thin coat to your entire face, then rub it in. Or smooth on your regular facial sunscreen then use the stick block just around your eyes - the waxiness will form a barrier so it doesn't drip into your eyes. Bonus: a waxy stick is also great for covering small spots like lips, ears and even your hair part.

ONE TO TRY UV Tripleguard SPF 30+ SunStick, \$8.95

EXCUSE

"It feels greasy"

The oils that assist in sun protection can be heavy and slick, and they get thicker as you go up the SPF scale, says dermatologist Dr Kathy Fields. **No-excuses fix** The simplest way to find a non-greasy sunscreen is to opt for a product labelled "lotion", says WH Beauty Expert Dr Elizabeth Dawes-Higgs. But with any products marked fluid, liquid or lotion, check the label to see how long they are water resistant for - you may need to reapply some lightweight products more regularly, she adds. If you find your face is greasy after using SPF, thoroughly cleanse with a soap-free wash at the end of the day.

ONE TO TRY Neutrogena Ultra Sheer Body Lotion 30+, \$14.99

Can I reuse last year's sunscreen?

No, love. Sunscreen has an expiry date of about a year and should be thrown away at the end of the season. If it starts to separate or change textures sooner, toss it, says dermatologist Dr Francesca Fusco.

EXCUSE

"The chemicals in sunscreen are worse than sun damage"

There's been a lot of scary buzz that two common sunscreen ingredients - oxybenzone (a UV blocker) and retinal palmitate (an antioxidant that keeps formulas effective longer) - cause hormone disturbances and may increase skin cancer risk. But, says Dr Dawes-Higgs, "the evidence does not support a significant hormonal disturbance with topical application of oxybenzone, and there is no evidence that retinal palmitate imparts an increased risk of skin cancer." **No-excuses fix** Still stressed? Ease your mind with a broad-spectrum option that's all natural.

ONE TO TRY WOTNOT 30+ natural sunscreen, \$25.95

EXCUSE

"My make-up has SPF in it"

Unless you're Brynne Edelsten chances are you don't wear enough foundation or powder to stay safe. "Even if you're relying on a tinted mineral powder with SPF, it will not give you enough coverage unless you apply at least 10 times the normal amount," says dermatologist Dr Francesca Fusco. "My patients who rely only on SPF in their make-up always have areas missing coverage." **No-excuses fix** Get good coverage with a tinted moisturiser but with higher SPF.

ONE TO TRY Hamilton Everyday Face Daily Defence 30+, \$12.95

EXCUSE

"It burns my skin"

An extra large vino may take the sting out of a bad day, but alcohol does the opposite for your skin. Too bad many sunscreens are loaded with the stuff. They may also contain PABA esters, benzophenones (like oxybenzone), fragrances and preservatives that can cause allergic reactions like rashes. **No-excuses fix** Choose a zinc-based formula. "Zinc sits on top of the skin rather than being absorbed; it's so mild it's the major component in nappy-rash creams, which are gentle enough to put on a baby's most sensitive areas," says dermatologic oncologist Dr Robert Friedman. **wh**

ONE TO TRY Invisible Zinc Face & Body 30+ Sunscreen, \$19.95

WHAT'S YOUR SKIN CANCER RISK?

More reason to do regular checks of your skin: 700 cases of melanoma are diagnosed in women under 40 each year. These factors can raise your risk:

PAST SUNBURNS Epidemiological research suggests childhood sun exposure contributes significantly to your lifetime risk of skin cancer.

TANNING-BED USE The levels of UV radiation emitted from solariums can be up to six times as strong as the midday sun. According to the Cancer Council Australia, people who use solariums under the age of 35 have an 87 per cent greater risk of melanoma than those who don't.

FAIR SKIN OR LIGHT EYES Fairer skin types that have less melanin are more sensitive to UV radiation, burn more quickly and are at greater risk of skin cancer than those with very dark skin, however all skin types can be damaged by too much UV radiation.

LIVING IN A SUNNY OR HIGH-ALTITUDE AREA Because of our sunny climate, Australia is the skin cancer capital of the world. UV radiation levels in our northern states are higher than in our southern parts, so in Northern states UV protection is needed all year round when the UV index is above three.

A FAMILY HISTORY In Australia, sunburn causes 95 per cent of melanomas. Very few cases are associated with family history - however if you have a close relative who has been diagnosed you may be more susceptible. Speak to your GP for advice.