

# INVOLVEMENT OF FRENCH PHARMACISTS IN SKIN CANCER PREVENTION

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## Context

A dramatic increase of the incidence of melanoma over the last 2 decades in France:

- ▶ more than 7,000 new cases diagnosed each year
- ▶ more than 1,400 deaths linked to melanoma each year

As a part as the national mobilization against cancer (Cancer Plan), the French national cancer institute (INCa) launches each summer a sun exposure awareness campaign entitled "Sun: instructions for use".

The objective of this campaign is to make people aware that:

- sun filter creams are not sufficient to protect against the damaging effects of sun exposure
- an effective photoprotection can only be accomplished through the use of complementary methods (creams, protective clothing, limitation of sun exposure).

## Implementation

### "Partners for sun risk protection"

The INCa has brought together all players willing to be involved in skin cancer prevention (public bodies, associations, tourism professionals, sunscreen manufacturers, media...) and proposed various educative tools in this field.

Since 2006, the French pharmacists' health education committee (Cespharm) has participated in this organization in order to help pharmacists to get involved in skin cancer prevention.

### Tools for pharmacists

Various tools have been designed by the Cespharm and the INCa:

#### ▶ a practical memo for the pharmacist

**Objectives:** to support pharmacists in their educative mission in the field of sun protection.

- This memo gathers the main recommendations on sun risk protection:
- damaging effects of sun exposure
  - general recommendations on sun protection: "sun: instructions for use"
  - at-risk groups
  - specific recommendations according to skin phototypes
  - proper use of sun filter creams...

2 copies of this practical memo were sent to all French pharmacies in June 2007. Since that date, the memo has remained available free on request from the Cespharm.

→ 50,000 practical memos sent to pharmacists in 2007-2008

#### ▶ a reference folder for the pharmacist on sun protection

This reference folder is intended to provide the pharmacist with complete information on skin cancer prevention. It is updated each year and distributed free on request to pharmacists by the Cespharm.

→ 4,000 reference folders sent to pharmacists between 2006 and 2008

#### ▶ posters and educative tools to be given to the public

- posters showing the pharmacist's involvement in this campaign
- leaflets and postcards intended to be given to the public
- playing cards specifically designed to educate children on sun protection have been distributed free on request to pharmacists by the Cespharm.

→ 15,000 posters, 210,000 leaflets, 6,500 postcards and 4,000 packs of cards distributed between 2006 and 2008.

### Window poster campaigns

Over the last three years, window poster campaigns on sun risk protection have been implemented during the summer (from June to August) in approximately 1,000 French community pharmacies.



## Conclusion

Pharmacists, as easily accessible health professionals, have an important role to play in educating the public about skin cancer prevention strategies. They can easily identify at-risk persons, help people to select an appropriate sun filter cream and deliver personalized sun protection recommendations.

All this shows the involvement of French pharmacists in the national prevention skin cancer campaign launched by the French national Cancer Institute in partnership with all the players concerned by sun risk protection.



Leaflet for the public



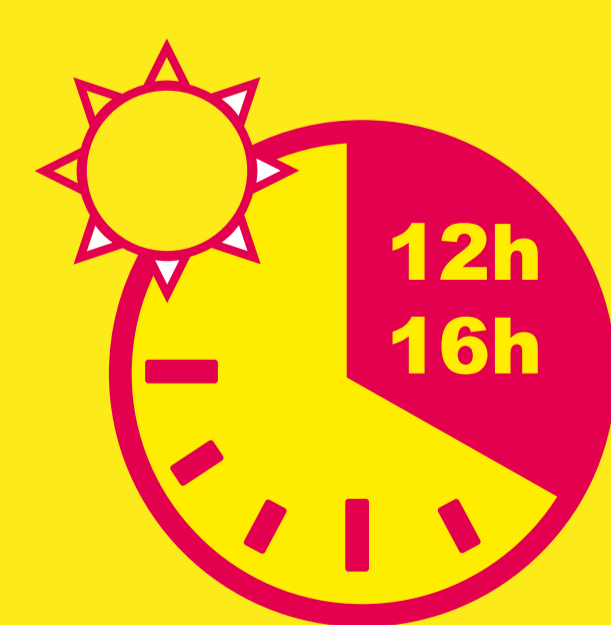
Memo for the pharmacist



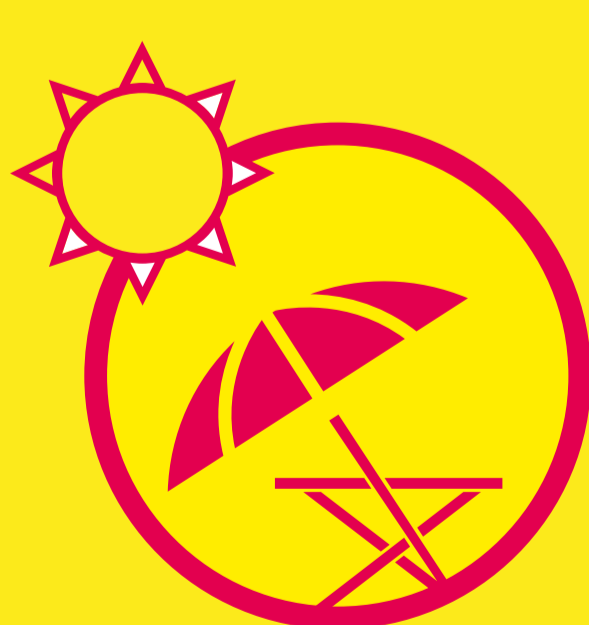
### CONTACT

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## SUN: INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE



**Avoid sun exposure between 12 noon and 4 pm**  
The sun's UV rays are strongest in the hours around midday.



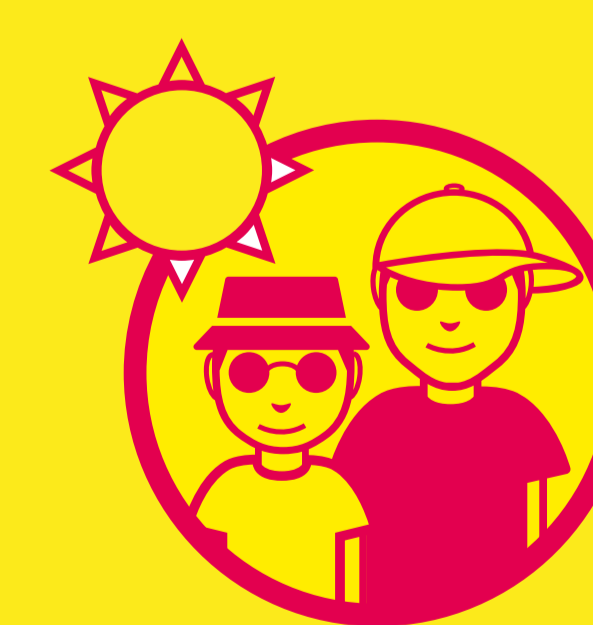
**Seek shade**  
Shaded places should be preferred for all outdoor activities. Beach umbrellas are useful but don't offer complete sun protection (UV rays are reflected by the sand...).



**Cover up**  
Wearing protective clothing is the best sun protection:  
- clothes (T-shirt, trousers...)  
- UV-blocking sunglasses with large frames.  
- a broad-brimmed hat to protect eyes, face, ears and neck.



**Use and often reapply sun filter creams**  
Using a cream may be helpful. But no cream can protect skin completely from the damaging effects of the sun.



**Take extra care with children**  
Children are particularly vulnerable to the damaging effects of sun. Sun exposure during childhood increase the risk of skin cancer later in life. Babies should never be exposed to sunlight.