



# Sun Safety: A Dermatologist's View Webinar Q&A

These are questions which came in during registration or the webinar which were outside the scope of the webinar or were not answered due to time constraints. Please note, the answers below are based on our readings and experience and not legal, medical, or veterinarian advice.

Q: Pets and sun: how to make sure they are safe?

A: The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association states that, "animals possess natural protection from the sun's rays beyond what humans do." They note that hairless animals, ones with thin coats, and ones with white coats are higher at risk of damage from solar radiation. Areas of the animal with less thick hair are more affected. They suggest keeping the pet out of the sun as a primary form of protection, and if sunscreen is to be used, to make sure it is safe for pets.

(<https://www.canadianveterinarians.net/related-resources/the-effect-of-sun-exposure-on-animals/>)

They also note that after clipping hair, which removes natural insulation, "applying a vet-approved sunscreen, staying out of the mid-day sun or placing a t-shirt over the bare trunk can help prevent sunburn and direct sun ray heating of sensitive skin."

(<https://www.canadianveterinarians.net/related-resources/close-clipping-of-the-hair-coat-removes-natural-insulation/>)

The ASPCA strongly encourages limiting the time in the sun, as the ingestion of sunscreen for pets is a concern, as pet sunscreens are not necessarily tested in the same way sunscreens for humans are.

(<https://www.aspca.org/news/pets-and-sunscreen-dont-get-burned-myths>). Their poison control centre gets calls about ingestion of sunscreen, and the main ingredients of concern are salicylates and zinc oxide. (<https://www.aspcapro.org/resource/sunscreen-and-zinc-oxide-ingestion-pets>)

The American Kennel Club has an article specifically about sunscreens for dogs (<https://www.akc.org/expert-advice/health/do-dogs-need-sunscreen/>).

We recommend talking with your veterinarian about their medical opinion about the need for sun protection for your pet and which sunscreen is best if it is needed.

Q: Should sunscreen be applied before or after moisturizer on face?

A: It is best to put sunscreen after serum, moisturizer, or other skin care. You may read that you need to put chemical sunscreens on first so they can be absorbed into the skin. We checked with Dr. Shamsuyarova about this claim, and she responded that sun filters in sunscreens absorb light as they are; there is no need for sunscreen to be absorbed by skin, although it will a bit anyway.

Q: Does solar radiation exposure have the potential for skin cancer later in life to be a compensable health issue for WCB similar to asbestosis?

A: A [search on CanLII.org](#), a website maintained by the Federation of Law Societies of Canada, shows that there have been multiple cases of workers being compensated due to exposure to solar radiation and developing skin cancer. There is also at least one denial of claim for compensation due to exposure to another carcinogen because it was more likely that the cause of the skin cancer was solar ultraviolet received outside of work rather than the workplace carcinogen. This decision was based on the worker's interaction with the workplace carcinogen and the type of damage seen. Each case describes the factors that went into the individual decision. Note that each WCB may have different regulatory obligations.