

By: [Gina White](#), Science Editor

## [How Sun Can Be Good for Your Health](#)

### *Benefits and tips*

Even the prehistoric people knew that the Sun was the driving force of life on Earth. Our star can heal and destroy, depending on how we use it. **Advantages** The sunlight kills microbes and confers to the skin a bright, healthy look and increased elasticity. A moderately tanned skin is more resistant to infections and sun burning than an untanned one. Many skin diseases (dermatitis) can be kept in check and even cured via controlled exposure to the sun. The sunlight also strengthens the immune system. The sun boosts our mood, helping in cases of chronic or acute depression, by stimulating the synthesis of endorphins (hormones that induce a sense of wellbeing) and this is certainly why we get depressed during cold and dark days. Daytime exposure to sunlight increases the melatonin synthesis during the night, regulating our sleep. The skin synthesizes vitamin D under the action of sunlight, so that we do not need to take pills or consume animal fats for stronger bones. This vitamin is also known to fight cancers, like cancer of colon, breast, leukemia and lymphomas. Blood circulation is stimulated by sunlight, and sun exposure balances the pulse, arterial pressure, moderately high glycemia and cholesterol levels, but also liver functioning, being effective in treating jaundice. Increased sweating due to sunlight relaxes the kidneys. Because the sunlight activates the thyroid, it also helps in losing weight by booming the metabolic rate. In women, the sunlight eases symptoms of premenstrual syndrome. Sunlight also speeds up the healing of the swollen joints during maximums of inflammation in arthritis patients. **How to sunbathe** All these beneficial effects can be achieved only in case of moderate exposure. Otherwise, your holiday on exotic islands may turn into a huge blow for your health. Take at least 5-6 sunbaths at home before going to the seaside. Even if it may not seem much, the tan acquired at home is a more powerful shield against long exposure during the first days at the seaside than the rather bogus solar lotions. If you have reached the beach without any previous sun exposure, start with short exposure to the sun of 5-6 minutes on the front side, back side and lateral sides. After that, spend at least 40 minutes in the shadow and drink refreshing liquids. Increase the daily exposure periods by 5-7 minutes, alternating sunbaths with periods spent in the shadow and coolness. After getting out of the sea water, wipe off the water droplets left on your body using a towel, as they attract the sun rays, causing lenticular burnings. Enter the sea water only after taking a sunbath. Do not remain in the sea water more than 10-15 minutes at once. Do not touch sea creatures, especially jellyfish (box jellyfish are deadly, while most other species can cause unbearable smarting that can last for hours). Do not swim with a full stomach and do not enter the cold water suddenly: this can cause you a muscle cramp. The best time for sunbathing is in the intervals between 9:00-11:00 and 16:00-17:00. Avoid the interval 13:00-15:00. The maximum intensity of the sun radiation is achieved at 14:00, when sunlight can have harmful effects (due to the UVB light).