

How do I take a balanced approach to sun exposure in New Zealand?

	Fair to Olive skin (Fitzpatrick skin types I – IV)	Naturally very dark skin (Fitzpatrick skin types V – VI)
From September to April when average UV Index levels are 3 and above	During spring and summer, sun protection is advised, <i>especially</i> between the hours of 11am and 4pm or whenever UV Index* levels reach 3 and above. The five SunSmart steps are: use of shade, sunhat, sunglasses, sun protective clothing & broad spectrum SPF 30+ sunscreen on exposed skin.	If you have naturally very dark skin (that does not sunburn), it is not necessary to wear sunscreen but you should still wear a sunhat and sunglasses to protect your eyes. Vitamin D supplementation may be required but you should consult your doctor about this.
	A few minutes of sun exposure to the face, arms and hands (or equivalent area of skin) on most days of the week outside peak UVR periods, i.e. before 11am or after 4pm, is thought to be sufficient for adequate vitamin D.	More sun exposure (up to 3-6 times the exposure level of fair to olive skin) may be required for adequate vitamin D.
From May to August when average UV Index levels are below 3	Sun protection is not needed unless in alpine regions or near highly reflective surfaces such as snow, sand or water or if you are outside for extended periods.	Eye protection is needed near highly reflective surfaces such as snow, sand or water.
	At least 30 minutes daily sun exposure to face, arms and hands (or equivalent area of skin) during the noon period across the week is advised. This level of sun exposure may not always be achievable in winter (particularly in southern regions). If you are concerned about your vitamin D levels, you should consult your doctor.	Sun exposure levels 3-6 times higher than for people with fair to olive skin. However, this level of sun exposure may not always be possible in winter, especially in southern regions. Vitamin D supplementation may be required but you should consult your doctor about this.

Please note that this is a guideline only. To check your skin type go to:
<http://www.sunsmart.org.nz/being-sunsmart/who-needs-be-careful/skin-types/skin-types>

*To check today's UV Index in your region, go to: www.sunsmart.org.nz/uvi

If you are concerned about your vitamin D levels, see your doctor.

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