What sun protection is effective?

- Wear appropriate body-covering clothing, made of cotton, for example. Where necessary, additional protective effects must be considered according to the risk assessment (e.g. a reflective vest).

- Wear headgear, with a wide brim or a neck guard.

- Use sunscreen on parts of the body not covered by clothing (e.g. face, hands). The sunscreen (e.g. cream, lotion) must have a sun protection factor of at least 30 and should be sweat-resistant.

- Wear sunglasses. The sunglasses should have sufficient UV absorption (“UV 400”) and protect from lateral solar radiation.
What is natural UV radiation?

Natural UV radiation is emitted by the sun and is invisible to the human eye.

Its strength depends on:
- Position of the sun
- Latitude
- Altitude above sea level
- Total ozone content
- Cloud cover
- Reflective surfaces (e.g. white or shiny surfaces)

What should one pay attention to?

- The longer one is exposed to the sun, the higher the danger of UV radiation becomes.
- The danger is especially high about noon between 11am and 3 pm.
- UV exposure is reduced by shade and clouds, but not entirely eliminated.
- Latitude and longitude have an influence on the level of radiation.

Are seafarers at risk?

- Since 2015-01-01, certain forms of white skin cancer can be recognised as an occupational disease.
- During the project "Determination of UV radiation exposure in seafarers", it was possible to develop a well-founded and integral database.* It was shown that irradiation increases with decreasing geographical latitude. The highest UV radiation exposure was detected on the head and shoulders.

* in cooperation with the Institute for Occupational Safety and Health of the DGUV (IFA)

How does natural UV radiation affect humans?

In low doses, natural UV radiation is essential. However, depending on duration and strength, serious damage to eyes and skin may occur.

One differentiates between:
- Acute effects, such as sunburn and corneal inflammation of the eye
- Chronic damage, such as cataracts, premature skin aging and skin cancer that will not be noticed until decades later

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