

Sunburn

DIRECTIONS: Read the passages below. Then answer the questions.

A:

What happens when you get a sunburn? The sun gives off three wavelengths of ultraviolet light: UVA, UVB and UVC. UVC light doesn't reach the Earth's surface, but the other two not only reach the earth's surface, they penetrate your skin, causing damage. While a sunburn is an obvious sign that you've been sitting in the sun for too long, damage from the sun isn't always visible. Ultraviolet light can change your DNA and prematurely age your skin. Prolonged overexposure has been linked to skin cancers.

How quickly you are likely to burn depends on your skin type, the strength of the sun's rays, and how long you are exposed to them. When you get a sunburn, your skin turns red and hurts. Severe burns can be accompanied by swelling and blisters. Other symptoms like fever, chills, nausea, headache and weakness may also be present. After several days, the skin begins to peel and itch. This is the body's way of getting rid of the sun-damaged cells.



B:

There is a direct correlation between sunburn and a serious form of skin cancer called melanoma. Your risk of melanoma doubles if you have had even one severe, blistering sunburn. In fact, Melanoma is believed to be triggered by a short (as opposed to repeated over years), single, blistering sunburn. Sunburn can be a precursor to nonmelanoma skin cancers as well. Basal cell carcinoma (BCC) and squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) can occur after many years of sunburns, and these kinds of tumors are found most frequently in areas that are typically exposed to the sun: the face, ears, hands, etc. But you don't have to burn so badly that you blister in order to increase your risk of skin cancer. Your risk also doubles if you have had five or more sunburns at all – meaning sunburns are serious business. This is cause for concern, especially with The Skin Cancer Foundation reporting that 42 percent of people polled experience at least one sunburn a year.

Name _____ **Comparing Authors**

1. Which of the sun's rays reach the earth's surface?

- a. UVA and UVC
- b. UVA and UVB
- c. UVB and UVC

2. Based on your reading of both texts, name at least three things that can happen to you if you soak up too much ultraviolet light.

3. What is the relationship between sunburn and melanoma?

4. What are some symptoms of sunburn?
