Summer is a great time in New England to get outside and enjoy the beautiful weather. Spending time at the beach, park or on the many hiking trails in the area is the perfect way to enjoy a day and get exercise. Although a sunny day may seem pleasant, the sun can be dangerous and must be taken seriously. Ultraviolet (UV) rays from the sun are the number one cause of skin cancer.

Follow these helpful tips to make sure that you and your loved ones stay protected.

Lather it on
- Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher and UVA and UVB protection at least every two hours, especially after sweating or swimming.
- Sunscreen should be applied 15 to 30 minutes before going outside.
- Most people don’t apply enough sunscreen. Apply the equivalent of two tablespoons of sunscreen to the exposed areas of the body and face.
- Look at the date — sunscreens typically have a shelf life of three years, but can become less effective if exposed to heat.

Take cover
- Avoid direct sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when the sun is at its strongest. Infants younger than six months should be kept out of direct sunlight.
- If you must be outside during this time, try to be in the shade as much as possible. Don’t forget to apply and reapply sunscreen, even when in the shade.
- Even on cloudy days, UV rays can still cause damage.

Dress to protect
- Loose fitting clothing made of tight knit fabric can provide some protection from the sun. Try to cover your skin as much as possible with long sleeves and pants.
- Long-sleeved swim tees and rash guards are great when you are at the beach or pool and many fabrics now offer SPF and UVA/UVB protection.
- Always wear a hat and sunglasses. Your eyes are extremely sensitive to the sun’s UV rays.