



# Safety Advisory Committee

## Advisory Notice. 19/June/23 All

### ***Rowing and Skin Cancer***

Summer has come early and we are all basking in glorious sunshine. It is a fun time of the year for all of us and we tend to spend more and more time on the water. With that glorious sunshine and extended time on the water comes risk of exposure to excessive UV rays.

As a rower, cox, coach or umpire, you spend a great deal of time outside during the summer months. This increases your risk of excessive sun exposure, which can cause premature skin ageing, sun damage, and skin cancer. Rowers are particularly at risk compared with participants in many other outdoor sports because they face a triple whammy from the sun above, its reflection off the water, and the actual water itself, which can wash away sunscreen.

#### **HSE's SunSmart Campaign 2023**

As part of the SunSmart campaign the HSE's National Cancer Control Programme, in collaboration with Healthy Ireland and cross-sectoral partners are working together to support people to protect their skin from the sun. The aim of the campaign is to increase awareness of the steps you, your crew mates and your family can take to protect your skin from the sun and reduce your risk of skin cancer in Ireland.

The HSE cancer prevention campaign is part of a National Cancer Control Programme design to make us aware of the risk and how we can mitigate those risks, please use this link to access more information on the SunSmart Campaign 2023, there is also excellent +material to download and display in your club [HSE SunSmart Campaign](#)

#### **Here are a few reasons why using suncream is essential:**

1. Protection from harmful UV rays: Suncream acts as a barrier against both UVA and UVB rays, safeguarding your skin from the damaging effects of sun exposure. It helps reduce the risk of sunburn, premature aging, and skin cancer.
2. Year-round necessity: UV rays are present even on cloudy days and during colder seasons. Consistently using suncream helps maintain healthy skin throughout the year.

#### **Remember, applying suncream correctly is crucial for optimal protection. Here are a few tips to keep in mind:**

1. Choose the right SPF: Select a suncream with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 30 or higher to shield your skin adequately.
2. Apply generously: Use enough suncream to cover all exposed areas of your skin, including the face, neck, ears, arms, and hands. Don't forget often overlooked areas like the back of the neck and tops of the ears.

FOR ADVICE ON ANY SAFETY MATTERS EMAIL [clubsupport@rowingireland.ie](mailto:clubsupport@rowingireland.ie)

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3. Reapply regularly: Reapply sunscreen every two hours, or more frequently if you are swimming or perspiring heavily.

4. Seek shade during peak hours: If possible, limit sun exposure between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. when the sun's rays are strongest.

Let's all embrace a sun-safe culture by taking advantage of our Staff Suncream Section as we are commitment to employee well-being. Remember, it's not just about the job we do but also the care we take of ourselves and each other.

Cover up, stay in the shade, wear suitable hats and UV protective clothing. Having a tan looks cool, having skin cancer can change your life, not for the better!

If you can't avoid being outside in the middle of the day, adopt the well-known Australian approach of 'slip, slap, slop'.

Slip on a shirt and slap on hat, Slop on the sunscreen

**Greasy grip alert:** if you've ever rubbed in sunscreen and then got straight in a boat, you'll know how hard to row when your palms are still slimy. One way to avoid this and keep the sunscreen on the backs of your hands (washing them will take it off, of course) is to wipe your hands with a small towel and antibacterial gel. It works a treat!



For more information, please read these articles from;

New Zealand rowing on Skin Cancer and rowing [Skin Cancer and Rowing](#)

British Rowing Sun Safety [Sun Safety](#)

US Rowing [Here comes the sun](#)

Rowingnews.com [Sun-Care](#)

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