



Sun Survey 2010

A survey of the sun habits of the Danish population in Denmark during the summer of 2010.

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Summary

This report gives an overview of the sun habits of the Danish population during the summer of 2010. It is based on a representative study carried out at the end of the summer in September 2010 among 4,156 respondents aged 15-64. Respondents were asked about their behaviour in the sun, their attitude to sun protection and their awareness of the sun safety campaign and the sun safety messages. Their responses are compared with similar responses from surveys undertaken in previous years.

Sun exposure and leisure

The survey showed that seven out of ten Danes aged 15-64 spend more than 30 minutes in the sun between 12 and 3pm during days off in the summer if the sun is shining. In particular, men and young people aged 15-19 are likely to do this. This indicates that it is relevant to communicate sun protection to the Danish public as the majority of Danes spend time in the sun during UV peak hours.

Sunburn

Sunburn is a risk factor for developing skin cancer. The survey showed that 41% of 15-64 year olds, 73% of 15-19 year olds and 30% of children under 18 years old had been sunburnt during the summer 2010. Sunburn was more frequent in the months of June and July.

Risk behaviour for sunburn

The biggest risk for sunburn is sunbathing. Among intentional tanners, people who stated that they used every opportunity to sunbathe, 46% were sunburnt at least once during the summer of 2010 compared with 31% of those who did not sunbathe.

The campaign's sun safety advice and sunburn

Sunscreen is the sun safety advice which is followed by the majority of respondents. 47% stated that they often use sunscreen as sun protection, 41% often seek shade, 24% often wear clothes that cover their body, overarms or thighs while 15% often wear a sunhat to protect against the sun.

Respondents who followed the sun safety advice to seek shade and cover up with clothes were sunburnt less than those who used sunscreen. This is probably because sunscreen is used in combination with sunbathing or behaviour where the person is directly exposed to the sun. 63% of respondents use sunscreen to prolong the amount of the time they spend in the sun. Another explanation for the increased incidences of sunburn among those who use sunscreen could be that sunscreen is applied without leading to sufficient protection.

The results show that it is necessary to firstly communicate the importance of sun safety; secondly raise awareness of the risks associated with sunbathing (even if sunscreen is used); and thirdly give guidance on how to use sunscreen to achieve efficient sun protection.

Campaign awareness

Awareness of the sun safety campaign is generally high. 81% of respondents had heard about the campaign, 74% had heard the slogan and 23% could remember all of the four pieces of sun safety advice.

Almost a fifth of respondents stated that the campaign had been influential in changing their behaviour in the sun. This proportion increases to 23% in the category of parents with small children (0-6 years old). Respondents with knowledge of the campaign also followed the sun safety advice more than those with no campaign awareness.

Development 2007-2010

In the period between 2008 to 2010 there has been no significant change in the incidences of sunburn. However, the proportion of intentional tanners has fallen over the years in the youngest age group. In 2008, a third of 15-19 year olds (34%) were in this category. That figure has now fallen to 20%.

Since 2007 there has been an increase in the proportion of people who use sunscreen and a slight increase in the proportion of those who cover up in the sun by wearing clothes. There is still no change in the number of respondents who follow the sun safety advice of wearing a sunhat or seeking shade.