



# The sun habits of the Danish population on holidays abroad in sunny destinations in 2015

Full report published in Danish by the Danish Cancer Society and TrygFonden, February, 2016.

Danish title: "Danskernes solvaner på solferie 2015– en kortlægning".

## Summary

The link between UV rays and skin cancer is well-documented. The greater the amount of UV radiation a person is exposed to, and the more sunburn they experience, the greater their risk of developing melanoma or skin cancer. UV radiation on holidays abroad in sunny destinations is often stronger than in Denmark, which is why it is extra important to protect against the sun when abroad on a sunshine holiday.

This report examines the sun habits of Danes when on holiday abroad in a sunny destination in 2015. The report is based on an online survey of 3,999 Danes aged 15-64. The data was collected from 31st August to 15th October 2015 and the survey is nationally representative<sup>1</sup> with regard to gender, age and region – and on the whole representative with regard to education<sup>2</sup>.

## Danes on holiday abroad in sunny destinations in 2015

38% of Danes aged 15-64 have been on holiday in a sunny destination over the past 12 months (between September/October 2014 and September/October 2015). This proportion is slightly lower than in 2012<sup>3</sup>-2014 when 41-43% had been on holiday in a sunny destination.

A greater number of those aged 15-29 than those aged 30-64 had been on holiday in a sunny destination during the past year. The proportion who had been on holiday in a sunny destination was greater in the Capital Region of Denmark and the North Denmark Region than the other regions in Denmark.

## Sunbathing on holiday in a sunny destination

Nine out of ten Danes sunbathe while on holiday in a sunny destination. In particular, women sunbathe on holiday and there are also regional differences, as Region Zealand has the fewest sunbathers. Slightly more Danes sunbathed on holiday in a sunny destination in 2015 compared with 2012.

---

<sup>1</sup> The random sample of 3,999 people is representative, meaning it reflects the make-up of the Danish population. In other words, the proportion of men of a certain age range in a certain region in the survey matches the proportion of men of a certain age range in this region of Denmark.

<sup>2</sup> The survey is generally representative with regards to education. In other words, the total data set is split in the same way as the population into the following three educational categories (most recently completed education): primary school, high school/vocational training, and further education.

<sup>3</sup> The survey has been carried out each year between 2007-2015. However, the questions about the sun habits of the Danes when on holiday abroad in a sunny destination were changed significantly in 2012. Therefore, the development in the sun habits of the Danes when on holiday abroad in a sunny destination can only be reported for the period 2012-2015.

### **Sun protection on holiday in a sunny destination**

Over 90% of Danes believe that it is both important and easy to protect themselves and their children against sunburn on holiday in a sunny destination. In particular, women make use of the Danish sun safety campaign advice. Those aged 15-19 are less likely to use sun protection than the other age groups.

Sunscreen remains the most popular form of sun protection, with shade as the second favourite. The proportion of Danes who often or always use sunscreen on holiday in a sunny destination has risen between 2013<sup>4</sup> and 2015, while the proportion of people who follow the other pieces of sun safety advice about seeking shade, or wearing a sun hat or clothes to cover up has not changed during this period.

### **Sunburn on holiday in a sunny destination**

One third (32%) of Danes aged 15-64 who had been on holiday abroad in a sunny destination within the past year stated that they were sunburnt while on holiday. The proportion of those aged 15-19 who were sunburnt while on holiday abroad in the sun is almost twice as large as the total proportion of Danes who were sunburnt aged 15-64 (60%). The proportion who get sunburnt on their holiday abroad in the sun has risen from 27% in 2012 to 33% in 2015.

### **Children's sun habits on holiday in sunny destinations**

Parents who had taken their children on holiday in a sunny destination within the past year were asked a number of questions about their children's sun habits while on their sunshine holiday. Among parents of children aged 12-17, 56% stated that their child took every opportunity to sunbathe or often sunbathed while on holiday in a sunny destination. Among parents of children aged 0-17, nine out of ten stated that sunscreen was used 'always or often' while 44% of children 'always or often' stayed in the shade.

According to the parents, 19% of children were sunburnt on holiday in a sunny destination. More children aged 12-17 than children aged 0-11 were sunburnt on this type of holiday. Of the children who were sunburnt on holiday in a sunny destination, a greater proportion came from the North Denmark Region compared to the other regions.

---

<sup>4</sup> The questions about the sun safety advice were changed in 2013. For this reason, analysis of the development in the use of sun safety advice has only been done for the period 2013-2015.