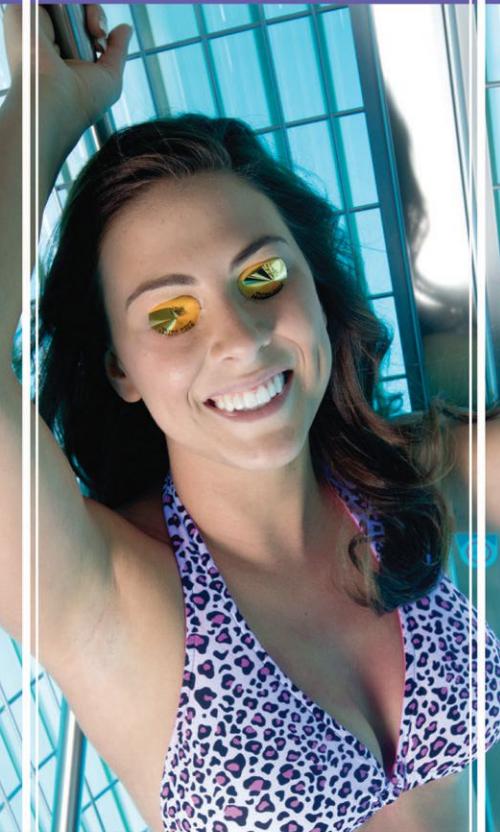


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Eye to Eye



A TOWEL IS NOT ENOUGH!

By Brenda Fishbaugh

Every day, millions of tanners think they're protecting their faces during a UV session by using a hand towel meant for wiping sweat off their bodies. The women who cover their faces with a towel think they are protected from UV rays and dreaded wrinkles. WRONG!

A towel provides a sun protection factor (SPF) of 5 – not enough to protect your face and certainly not enough to protect your eyes! For protecting our eyes during a tanning session, the FDA has only accepted UV-block goggles and disposable eye protection. But let's talk about how that towel does NOT protect your skin ...

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Did you know that many clothing manufacturers are now offering UV Block garments? Why? Simply because the clothes we wear outdoors in sunny weather are NOT protecting our skin from UV damage. Yes, the tanning rays are sufficiently blocked so you aren't tanning, but all the invisible rays penetrate the fabric, possibly damaging your skin. "Weave is more important than fabric type," reports the Skin Cancer Foundation newsletter. "The tighter the weave, the higher the SPF and darker clothes tend to be a higher SPF," the report asserts.

Research from the Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, GA suggests that the most popular summer garb of T-shirts and polo shirts are not adequate protection, as their SPF rank is 6.5. This has led to the creation of new high-tech clothing that will block the rays when you wear it outside. The new garments are coated with colorless compounds that absorb UV and offer an SPF of 30 or more.

Some clothing now carries a new rating – a UPF, or Ultraviolet Protection

Factor. Outdoor clothing giant REI offers hundreds of garments for men, women and kids with protection of SPF 40+. Land's End, another large catalog company with sportswear, has shorts and tops with UPF nylon fabric (nylon is a tight weave) and lots of clothes for kids with UV protection (a great idea).

I offer you the above as information only. I personally tan my face and of course, I wear eye protection every time I tan, whether indoors or outdoors. I tan very moderately, go to great lengths not to burn, and I use great products both when I tan and in my facial care regimen to ensure my skin is moisturized. But if you have different feelings

about exposing your face to UV, then don't waste your time with a towel. Use a lotion with an SPF of 15 or higher, preferably one made for the face that won't clog pores. Or buy a shirt with UPF and put that over your face, with eyewear on, of course. Or, use one of the cloth UV face-covering masks sold at most tanning salons. Remember to protect your eyes, as the skin of your eyelids only provides a 25% UV-block.

Your salon should offer a variety of eye protection types, so learn about each one and spend the time with your salon guests to find which works best for them, and encourage them to keep them in a clean and safe place so that they will have their vision for a long time to come. They will appreciate your efforts!

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About the Author:

Tanning industry veteran Brenda Fishbaugh is president of Eye Pro, Inc., makers of disposable eyewear. She travels

extensively training salons on the effects of UV light on vision.

