

# A Towel is Not Enough!

By Brenda Fishbaugh



Every day, thousands of tanners think they're protecting their faces during a UV session by using a hand towel meant for wiping sweat off their bodies. Women who cover their faces with a towel think they are protected from UV rays and getting 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

invisible rays penetrate the fabric, possibly causing damage. "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 apparel that

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 tan my face and, of course, I wear eyewear every time I tan, whether indoors or outdoors. I tan very moderately, go to great lengths to not burn, and I use great facial products when I tan to ensure my skin is moisturized. But if you have different feelings about exposing your face to UV, then don't waste your time using a towel. Use outdoor lotions with SPF15 or higher, preferably one made for the face that won't clog pores. Or, use one of the UV protective face-covering masks sold at most tanning salons. Remember to protect your eyes, every time, as eyelids provide only a 25% UV block.

Your salon should offer a variety of eye protection types, so learn about each one and spend some time with your salon guests to find which works best for them. ■

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has only approved the use of UV-block goggles and disposable eye protection. But let's talk about how that towel is also not protecting your SKIN.

Did you know that many clothing manufacturers are now offering UV-Block garments? Why? Simply because the clothes we wear outdoors in sunny weather do not provide protection from UV damage. Yes, the tanning rays are sufficiently blocked, so you aren't tanning your skin, but all the

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 higher.

Some outdoor clothing now carries a new rating – a UPF, or Ultraviolet Protection Factor. Outdoor clothing manufacturer REI offers hundreds of garments for men, women and kids with SPF of 40+. Land's End, another large catalog company with sportswear, offers shorts and tops with UVF



**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.

