

Sunworship

By Sarah Jacob

Your prayer won't be heard by the all-powerful sun god whose nature is to shine on. It never changes its strength, even though linguistically we refer to the sun's rays as getting stronger and more powerful. Despite the negative press that this old star has endured in recent decades, its golden rays are consistent. It is our climate that has become more fragile and unable to filter the power as effectively as it did once upon a time, before greenhouse gases existed to such a degree.



These gases that get trapped in the atmosphere are giving dear Mother Earth a serious hot flash, which according to some scientists, is just because of her time of life: Sunopause perhaps. In fact, MIT climatologist Richard Lindzen claims that mankind is not to blame for global warming and that Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* is a misreading of the facts. But for the purposes of sunbathing, it matters not what is the cause; it only matters that it is. The Earth is approximately 1 degree warmer since 1970, and according to an article in the *New York Times*, it will be 7 degrees higher by 2100, increasing our ocean levels by up to 23 inches. That's a lot of salt water. Maybe it is evolution, and shortly we will sprout fins, kind of like the mythological Atlantean culture that pre-dated the ancient Greeks. But that idea sounds a bit fishy.

Where were we? Ah yes. Sunbathing. So, the sun can be admired and loved, but only briefly and with the utmost care.

This is why it is so much more dangerous to enjoy basking in the sun, like you probably did when you were a child, without the fear of increased free radicals deforming your perfectly formed cells. So how do you love the sun without incurring sun damage? Just follow these ten simple steps and you should be fine.

1. If you are fair-skinned, then in the day, cover your body with Elemis Body Glow SPF 30 (\$46) and your face with Elemis Wrinkle Control Sun Screen SPF 30 (\$35). If you are working or walking/driving around, then on your face you can opt to apply Elemis Liquid Layer, SPF 30 (\$39) instead, which is very light, but offers the same high protection. Remember, when you are driving and those sun rays gleam through your windshield, you are doing a form of sunbathing (aka sun-driving). Protect daily.

2. For those of us with darker skin types, including African-American, Indian and Mediterranean skin types, you can opt for Elemis Body Glow SPF 19 (\$43) and Elemis Vital Face Sun Screen (\$28). But don't for one minute believe you are exempt from the

sun's ravishing rays. The fairer parts of the body, like the hands and the soles of the feet, are susceptible to melanoma.

- 3.** When walking around, try to wear loose white cotton clothing and be as covered as possible. Dark colors attract the sun and white reflects it, so reflect the light, don't absorb it. Also, the sun is so strong that it has been known to burn people through fabrics that are loosely woven. Opt for tightly woven cottons.
- 4.** Take vitamins C, D, E and beta-carotene, along with selenium, calcium and zinc to boost your skin cells and prevent sun damage. Eat fresh fruits and veggies that are high in these essential skin-boosting vitamins and minerals.
- 5.** According to some studies, green tea has been found to prevent the skin from burning if you drink it while you are sunbathing.
- 6.** Wear sunglasses that block 100% UVA and UVB radiation. According to a study conducted by Transitions Optical, only 6% of us sunbathing lunatics know that the sun can damage the eyes.
- 7.** Avoid sunbathing during the hours of 11am and 4pm during the hottest months, and remember that you can still burn in the shade.
- 8.** If you use an SPF 30, it means that you can supposedly stay in the sun 30 times longer than your normal sunburn threshold. So if you burn after 10 minutes, you should be able to stay in the sun for 300 minutes without burning. But let's face it—that is way too long. So, as a guideline, make it 2-3 hours max, ensuring you reapply sunscreen every 30 minutes.
- 9.** Don't blame the sun; it's gorgeous.
- 10.** Love your skin color the way it is. Seems to me, this is the root of the issue. If you have pale, milky skin, then love it just as it is.