

# Carel's Pharmacy & Compounding Center

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## Sunburns

Sunburn is the skin's reaction to the ultraviolet radiation (UV) in sunlight. Almost all of us will get sunburnt at least once in our lives. Sunburn can occur in less than 15 minutes and can take a few days or weeks to heal depending on the severity. The long term effects of repeated bouts of sunburn include premature wrinkling and increased risk of skin cancer. Once the skin damage occurs, it is impossible to reverse.

### **Symptoms**

The symptoms of sunburn include:

- Change in skin color, ranging from pink to red and even purple
- Fever, Chills
- Pain and Swelling
- Fluid-filled blisters that may itch and eventually pop or break. Broken blisters peel to reveal even more tender skin beneath.

### **Reactions to UVA and UVB radiation**

In addition to light and heat, the sun emits invisible ultraviolet radiation. Excessive exposure to UV damages the skin permanently and may cause skin cancer, including the dangerous malignant melanoma. The three types of ultraviolet (UV) radiation, based on their wavelength, are UVA, UVB and UVC. The earth's atmosphere absorbs nearly all of the most dangerous one - UVC - before it reaches the ground. UVA and UVB radiation are both involved in sunburn, but skin reacts differently to each one:

- **UVA** - penetrates into the deeper skin layers and damages the site where new skin cells are born. Wrinkles, age spots and sagging skin are the results of long term exposure to UVA radiation.
- **UVB** - affects the surface skin layer. The skin responds by releasing chemicals that dilate blood vessels. This causes fluid leakage and inflammation - better known as sunburn.

### **Treatment of Sunburns**

Sunburns usually heal themselves in a couple of weeks, but there are treatments to alleviate the symptoms in the meantime:

- Cool bath or cool, wet compresses to alleviate pain and heat
- Topical or oral anti-inflammatories to relieve inflammation and pain
- Rehydrate the skin with moisturizing cream
- Refrain from sunlight exposure until healed

This month's featured compound is **Ketoprofen 5%/Lidocaine 0.5% Sunburn Gel**.

***Ketoprofen 5%/Lidocaine 0.5% Sunburn Gel*** is a compounded topical treatment for sunburn. It is a transdermal gel with a combination of medications, including Ketoprofen and Lidocaine. Ketoprofen is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication used to treat pain and inflammation. Lidocaine is an anesthetic used to relieve pain. Ketoprofen 5%/Lidocaine 0.5% Sunburn Gel is applied to the affected area as needed. For severe pain and discomfort, the strengths of the medications may be increased and applied 4 to 6 times daily.

If you have any questions regarding these therapies or any other medication related problems, please call our specially trained compounding pharmacists and staff at (580) 355-4540.