

New suntan drug could prevent skin cancer

17th June, 2017



Scientists have developed a drug that can copy the effects of sunlight. The new drug tricks the skin into making it darker and giving us a suntan. The drug makes our body

produce more of a natural pigment found in our skin called melanin. A pigment is something in our body that colours our skin. Plants also have pigments that give them different colours. The scientists are from the Massachusetts General Hospital in the USA. They say their new drug could have many benefits for our health. The biggest benefits could be to prevent skin cancer and perhaps even slow down how old people look. Too much sunlight and getting suntans can give us skin cancer, make our skin look old and give us many wrinkles.

Scientists say the drug can safely give people suntans because there are no damaging UV rays. When people are out in the sun, UV rays slowly burn our skin and damage it. The rays make lighter-skinned people turn red, unless those people use sunblock or cover their skin. The drug makes the body produce more dark melanin, which makes our skin look tanned. Melanin is the body's natural sunblock. Researcher Dr David Fisher said the drug could help fight skin cancer - the most common type of cancer. He said the drug could make our body produce more melanin. This could protect the skin from UV radiation and cancer. He said: "Dark pigment is associated with a lower risk of all forms of skin cancer."

Sources: bbc.com / sciencemag.org / medicaldaily.com

Writing

Suntans are dangerous and unhealthy looking. We should avoid them. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

developed / sunlight / suntan / natural / skin / scientists / health / benefits / wrinkles / drug / safely / UV rays / sunblock / tanned / cancer / common / protect / lower risk

True / False

- A new drug copies the effects of sunlight. T / F
- The drug tricks the skin into producing a skin colouring. T / F
- Researchers said the new drug will not have many health benefits. T / F
- The new drug may slow down the rate at which we get wrinkles. T / F
- The new drug can give people a suntan without needing UV rays. T / F
- UV rays help protect our skin. T / F
- Melanin does not help block the Sun's UV rays. T / F
- The most common type of cancer is lung cancer. T / F

Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| 1. copy | a. stop |
| 2. produce | b. normal |
| 3. natural | c. safeguard |
| 4. prevent | d. harmful |
| 5. old | e. become |
| 6. damaging | f. mimic |
| 7. turn | g. kinds |
| 8. fight | h. aged |
| 9. protect | i. make |
| 10. forms | j. battle |

Discussion – Student A

- How healthy is sunlight?
- What are the bad things about sunlight?
- How does sunlight make you feel?
- What do you think of suntans?
- Would you take the new drug?
- What do you do to stay young looking?
- Do you worry about wrinkles?
- How well do you think the drug will work?

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. a drug that can copy the effects | a. give people suntans |
| 2. The new drug tricks | b. wrinkles |
| 3. something in our body that colours | c. cancer |
| 4. slow down how | d. the skin |
| 5. give us many | e. rays |
| 6. the drug can safely | f. of sunlight |
| 7. damaging UV | g. our skin |
| 8. use sunblock | h. type of cancer |
| 9. the most common | i. old people look |
| 10. a lower risk of all forms of skin | j. or cover their skin |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Why do people want a suntan?
- What do you know about UV rays?
- What do you know about skin cancer?
- How can we educate people about the dangers of UV rays?
- How long will it be before we have drugs to cure everything?
- What do you do to look after your skin?
- What questions would you like to ask the researchers?

Spelling

- copy the effects of ihgtlnlsu
- makes our body uerdpoc more
- a taunalr pigment found in our skin
- have many fietbesn for our health
- rpveent skin cancer
- give us many ilsnkerw
- there are no aanmggid UV rays
- people use onbskclu or cover their skin
- the drug could help gifht skin cancer
- the most omconm type of cancer
- protect the skin from UV iodairatn
- caietassod with a lower risk

Answers – Synonym Match

1. f	2. i	3. b	4. a	5. h
6. d	7. e	8. j	9. c	10. g

Role Play

Role A – Drugs

You think drugs are the best things to protect us from the Sun. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): sunglasses, sunblock or what we eat.

Role B – Sunglasses

You think sunglasses are the best things to protect us from the Sun. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): drugs, sunblock or what we eat.

Role C – Sunblock

You think sunblock is the best thing to protect us from the Sun. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): sunglasses, drugs or what we eat.

Role D – What We Eat

You think what we eat are the best things to protect us from the Sun. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): sunglasses, sunblock or drugs.

Speaking – Protection

Rank these with your partner. Put the best things to protect our skin at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| • sunblock | • drugs |
| • staying indoors | • parasols |
| • long sleeves | • caps |
| • what we eat | • sunglasses |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	T	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.