

THE GOOD SUN

SWIM SUITS

Sun worshipping, is not all bad!

A well-known benefit of the sun lies in its ability to help the skin produce vitamin D, which, in turn, helps calcium absorption. "Without sun, you either have to ingest vitamin D, by drinking milk, for example, or take it in supplement form," says Michael Evan Sachs, M.D., director of research in the division of facial plastic surgery, New York Eye and Ear Infirmary. The proof that vitamin D is important to the body is quite clear; symptoms of deficiency include muscle weakness, fatigue, and,

eventually, osteoporosis.

Spirit boosters. "The sun has been shown to be psychologically uplifting, too," says Dr. Sachs. "Studies have indicated that people can actually display psychotic behavior from light deprivation." This condition, known as SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder), varies greatly among individuals.

Seeing the light. If you're just stepping out for a few minutes, apply an eye-area sunblock (make sure to use one with a low-alcohol content, since alcohol can sting the eye area and cause irritation), and consider

leaving your glasses behind. Take care, however, to wear your glasses for longer exposure times, like days spent at the beach. Dr. Sachs advises that the glasses you wear be specifically designed to filter the harmful ultraviolet rays. "Many poorly made sunglasses are so dark, they encourage you to open up your eyes more; but at the same time they don't screen the negative rays and *that* can cause damage to your wide-open eyes." How *not* to be in the dark the next time you choose sunglasses? Simply make sure they block UV rays.

