# Sun Safety

## Health indicator report

## Background

- The purpose of this health indicator report is to provide information about sunburns and sun safety behaviours among adults aged 18 and over living in Halton Region.
- Ultraviolet (UV) radiation comes from the sun as well as artificial sources like tanning beds and sunlamps.[1] Exposure to UV radiation can have adverse health effects in as little as 15 minutes of exposure.[2] Overexposure to UV radiation can lead to sunburn, premature ageing, skin cancers, diseases of the eye, and immune suppression.[3]
- UV radiation peaks during the hours of 11am to 4pm. To decrease the risk of sun damage, it is recommended to seek shade during peak periods, wear sunglasses, wear protective clothing (including a hat), and/or wear sunscreen when out in the sun.[2]
- This Health Indicator Report uses data from the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System.

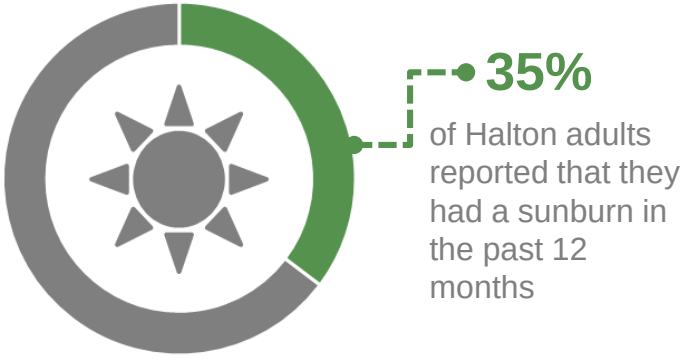
## Key findings

- 35% of Halton adults reported having had a sunburn in the past 12 months.
- Adults aged 18-24 and 25-44 were more likely to report having had a sunburn in the past 12 months.
- As income increased so did the percent of adults who reported having had a sunburn in the past 12 months.
- Adults who were post secondary graduates were more likely than non-post secondary graduates to report having had a sunburn in the past 12 months.
- Adults in Halton often or always use the following sun protective behaviours:
    - Wears sunglasses (73%)
    - Wears sunscreen (52%)
    - Wears protective clothing (hat) 49%
    - Avoids sun at peak hours (11am-4pm) 38%

# Sunburn

## Halton

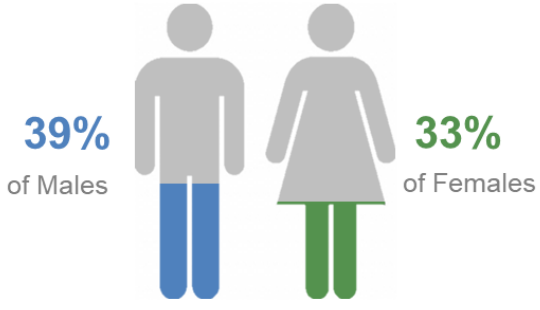
- In 2017, 35% of Halton adults reported having had a sunburn on any part of their body in the past 12 months.




Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they had a sunburn in the past 12 months, Halton Region, 2017

## Sex

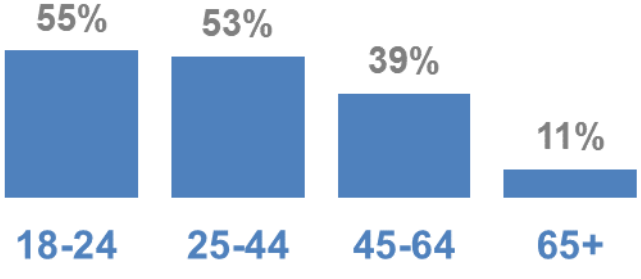
- In 2017, there were no statistically significant differences by sex in the percentage of adults who reported having had a sunburn in the past 12 months.




Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they had a sunburn in the past 12 months, by sex, Halton Region, 2017

## Age

- In 2017, adults were less likely to report having had a sunburn in the past 12 months as age increased. This difference was **statistically significant** when comparing those aged 18-24 to those 65+, those aged 25-44 to those aged 45-64 and 65+ and when comparing adults aged 45-64 to adults aged 65+.

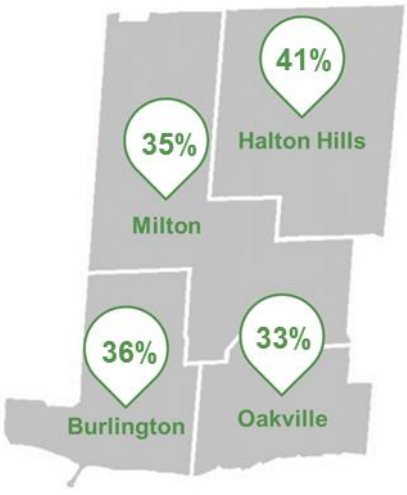



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they had a sunburn in the past 12 months, by age group, Halton Region, 2017

# Sunburn

## Municipality

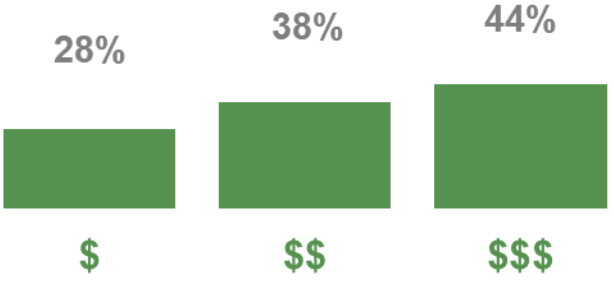
- In 2017, there were no statistically significant differences by municipality in the percentage of adults who reported having had a sunburn in the past 12 months.




Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they had a sunburn in the past 12 months, by municipality, Halton Region, 2017

## Income

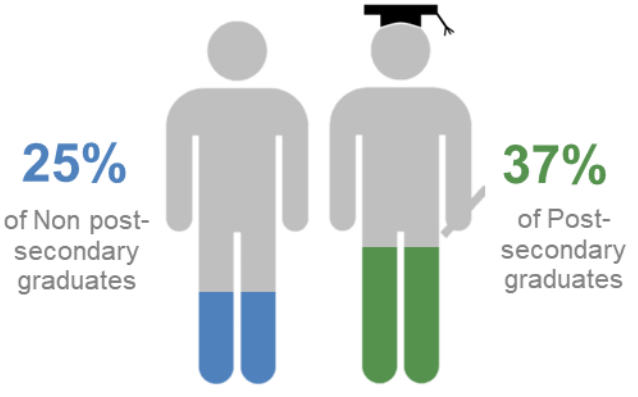
- In 2017, adults were more likely to report having had a sunburn in the past 12 months as income increased. This difference was **statistically significant** when comparing the low and high income groups.




Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they had a sunburn in the past 12 months, by income, Halton Region, 2017

## Education

- In 2017, adults aged 25 and over who were post-secondary graduates were more likely than non-post secondary graduates to report having had a sunburn in the past 12 months. This difference was **statistically significant**.

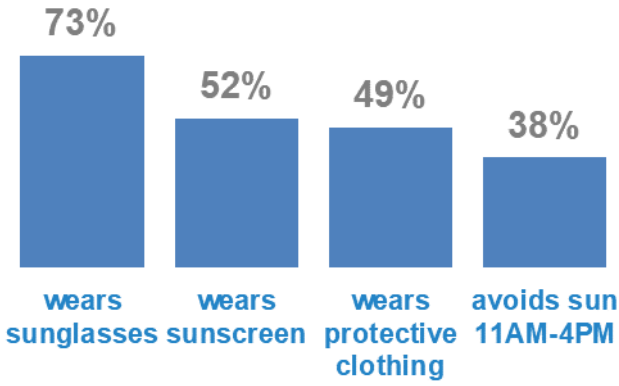



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported that they had a sunburn in the past 12 months, by education, Halton Region, 2017

# Protective Behaviours

## Protective Behaviours

- In 2017, Halton adults often or always used the following sun protective bahaviours:
  - 73% wore sunglasses
  - 52% wore sunscreen
  - 49% wore protective clothing
  - 38% avoid the sun between 11AM and 4PM




Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who always or often using sun protective beahviours, by behaviour, Halton Region, 2017

# About RRFSS

- The Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System is an on-going telephone survey (land line and cell phone) used to collect information on attitudes, behaviours, knowledge and awareness of issues related to health in Halton. RRFSS is conducted by the Institute of Social Research and York University.
- Each year, a random sample of approximately 1,200 adults aged 18 and over are surveyed in Halton Region.
- In 2016, RRFSS underwent changes in sampling and analysis methodology. **Therefore, it is not recommended to compare data from the 2016 onwards to past years of RRFSS data.**
- For more information on RRFSS methodology and limitations, see the RRFSS Data Notes and Data Interpretation Guide at halton.ca

# Data notes

**Definitions:**

**Sunburn** refers to any reddening discomfort of the skin that lasts longer than 12 hours after exposure to the sun or other ultra violet sources, such as tanning beds or sunlamps.

**Sunscreen** does not include sunscreen that is included in body lotion, make up, hand cream etc...

**Data Source:** Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System [2017], Halton Region Health Department and Institute for Social Research, York University.

Estimates marked with an asterisk (*) should be interpreted with caution due to high variability. Estimates marked with a double asterisk (**) are not reportable.

**References**


1. Health Canada. 2014. Ultraviolet Radiation. Accessed June 2016 from http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/radiation/ultraviolet/index-eng.php
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. 2014. Sun Safety. Accessed June 2016 from http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/basic_info/sun-safety.htm
3. Health Canada. 2016. Sun Safety. Retrieved June 2016 from http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/sun-sol/index-eng.php


For more health indicator and health status reports, visit the Halton Health Statistics website at halton.ca

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