

Health Indicator Report

Sun Safety

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

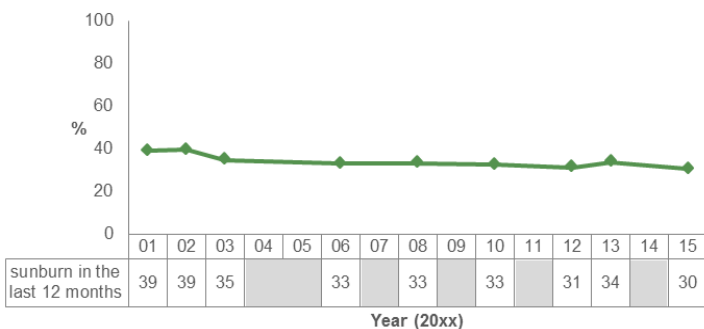
This Health Indicator Report uses data from the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System.

Sunburns

Trends Over Time

In 2015, 30% of Halton adults reported having had a sunburn on any part of their body in the last 12 months.

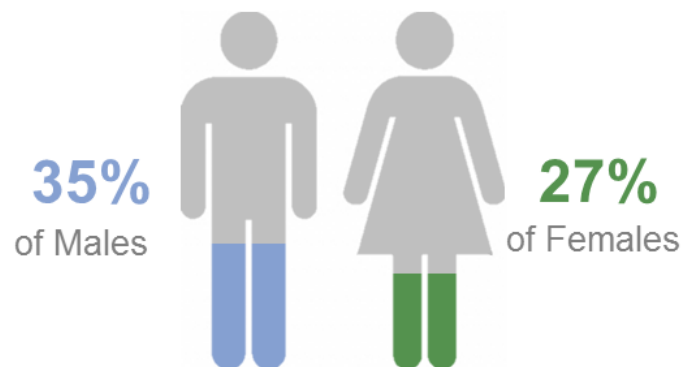
From 2001 to 2015 the percentage of adults in Halton who reported having had a sunburn in the last 12 months decreased from 39% to 30%, and this decrease was **statistically significant**.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported having had a sunburn on any part of their body in the last 12 months, Halton Region, 2001-2015

Sex

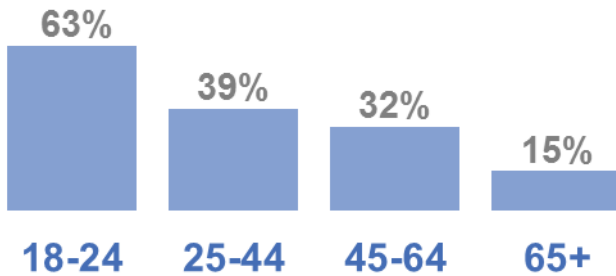
In 2015, Halton males were more likely than females to report having had a sunburn in the last 12 months, and this difference was **statistically significant**.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported having had a sunburn on any part of their body in the last 12 months, by sex, Halton Region, 2015

Age

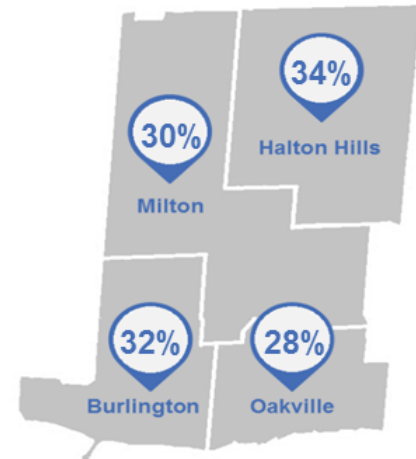
In 2015, the percentage of Halton adults aged 18 and over who reported having had a sunburn in the last 12 months decreased as age increased. This difference was **statistically significant** when comparing adults aged 18-24 to all other age groups and when comparing adults aged 65+ to all other age groups.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported having had a sunburn on any part of their body in the last 12 months, by age, Halton Region, 2015

Municipality

In 2015, there were no statistically significant differences by municipality in the percentage of Halton adults who reported having had a sunburn in the last 12 months.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported having had a sunburn on any part of their body in the last 12 months, by municipality, Halton Region, 2015

Income

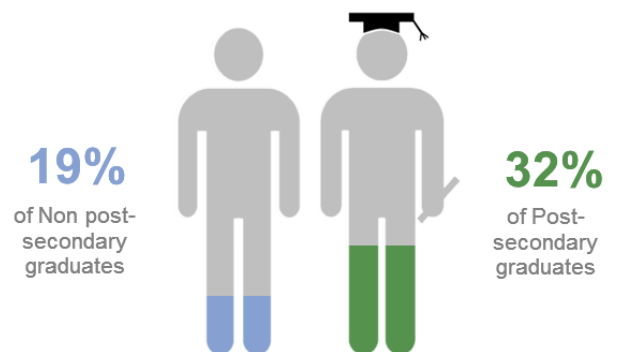
In 2015, the percentage of Halton adults who reported having had a sunburn in the last 12 months increased as income increased. This difference was **statistically significant** when comparing adults in the low income group to adults in the middle and high income groups.



Percentage of adults aged 18 and over who reported having had a sunburn on any part of their body in the last 12 months, by income, Halton Region, 2015

Education

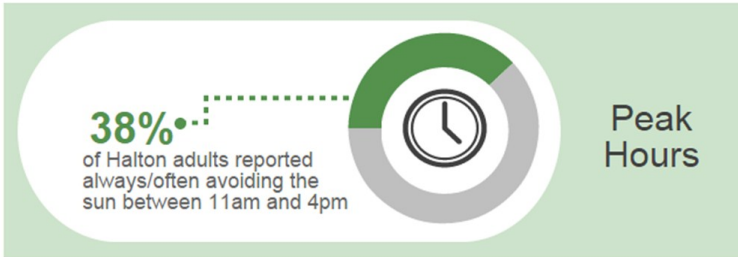
In 2015, the percentage of Halton adults who reported having had a sunburn in the last 12 months was higher among those who were post-secondary graduates compared to those who were not post-secondary graduates, and this difference was **statistically significant**.



Percentage of adults aged 25 and over who reported having had a sunburn on any part of their body in the last 12 months, by education, Halton Region, 2015

Protective Behaviours

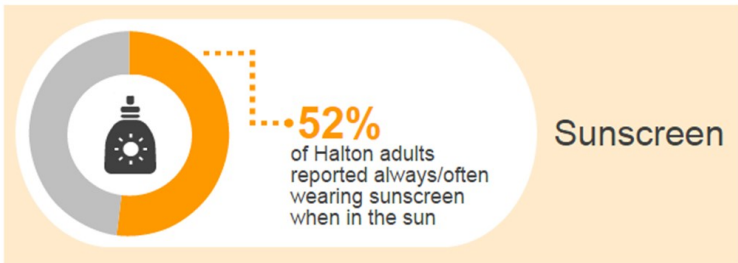
In 2015, 38% of Halton adults reported always/often avoiding the sun between 11am and 4pm. This has not changed significantly since 2001.



In 2015, 73% of Halton adults reported always/often wearing sunglasses with UV protection when in the sun. From 2001 to 2015, this **significantly** increased from 64% to 73%.



In 2015, 52% of Halton adults reported always/often wearing sunscreen when in the sun. From 2001 to 2015, this **significantly** increase from 44% to 52%.



In 2015, 43% of Halton adults reported always/often wearing protective clothing when in the sun. This has not changed significantly since 2001.



Data Notes

For more information on RRFSS, methods, statistical significance and limitations associated with health indicator reports, please see the Data Notes and Guide available at halton.ca.

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 [2001– 2003, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2013, and 2015], 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.

Last Revised: June 13th, 2016

Expected Update: 2018