

20% of children's skin health in jeopardy

A recent British Skin Foundation survey has found that 20% of children could be in danger of having serious reactions to black henna temporary tattoos.

20% of adults have also put themselves at risk by having the temporary fashion accessory which is popular at overseas holiday destinations, festivals, funfairs and the British seaside during the summer months.

Real henna is orange/brown in colour. Black henna tattoos are not based on henna at all, but a substance called paraphenylenediamine (PPD) which is found in hair dyes. PPD is allowed for use in hair dye, but its use for skin contact products, such as temporary tattoos, is illegal in the UK & Europe.

Shockingly, three quarters of people surveyed were not aware that black henna tattoos contain PPD and that when it's used on the skin it can be dangerous.

Three quarters of people were unaware that having a black henna tattoo can drastically increase the risk of allergic reaction when using a hair dye in the future.

Dr Anjali Mahto, Consultant Dermatologist & British Skin Foundation spokesperson says, "It's worrying to see that the public just don't realise the danger PPD can pose when it is used on the skin. We really want to get the message out there that so-called black henna tattoos are not safe for the skin and should be avoided at all costs. Parents, teens and even adults should stay well away from black henna tattoos this summer on holidays abroad, at festivals, funfairs or the British seaside – it's simply not worth the risk."



Student James Colley, 19, got a black henna tattoo on holiday in Zante last summer. What was meant to be a bit of holiday fun left him with a scar on his face.

James says, "Had I known the dangers of black henna tattoos I would have stayed away. It never crossed my mind that it might cause such a severe reaction. There was a lot of pain involved in the aftermath which is still fresh in my memory. My advice to people this summer is to stay away from black henna tattoos– no matter how much fun it seems at the time, you will regret it."

Dr Christopher Flower, Director-General CTPA says, "There is no such thing as 'black henna'. A large number of people are not aware that so-called black henna temporary tattoos may contain the hair dye PPD. In the UK and EU, this use of PPD is illegal. Black henna temporary tattoos can cause serious issues. Not only can they trigger extremely painful damage to skin, they may also result in life-long allergy to hair dyes. We want to warn of these dangers, and what may seem to be harmless fun for children could have serious long-term consequences."

03/05/18

But it's not all bad news, as the sun safety message sinks in.

There is a growing trend of using high factor sunscreen in both the UK and abroad. Of those who use sunscreen in the UK, three in five people are using SPF 30 or higher. More than three quarters of those surveyed who use sunscreen abroad, opt for SPF30 or higher – both in line with British Skin Foundation guidelines.

Seven out of ten of people surveyed with children use SPF 30 or higher on them in the UK. Only one in ten parents do not put sunscreen on their children in the UK at all.

Some three quarters of parents use SPF30 or higher on their children when abroad. Less than one in ten of people opt not to use sunscreen on their children whilst abroad.

Dr Anjali Mahto, Consultant Dermatologist & British Skin Foundation spokesperson says, “It’s fantastic to see the sun safety message has hit home to the British people. It’s vitally important to protect the skin from harmful UV rays both at home and abroad. Also remember to protect children’s skin as sun damage in childhood can lead to problems – such as skin cancer – later in life.”

Getting information from a trusted source

The British public now seek sun safety advice from reputable sources. Sensibly, more than three in five people surveyed trusted sun and skin information from dermatologists.

Matthew Patey, British Skin Foundation CEO says, “I’m pleased to see that the British public are turning to medical professionals when it comes to skin advice. There’s nobody better qualified to give sun safety advice than a consultant dermatologist.”



Factors when choosing sunscreen

Pleasingly, the top influences when choosing a sunscreen were the SPF and the level of UVA/UVB protection, with three in five people stating these factors as important.

Nowadays, 86% of sunscreen users appear to understand sunscreen labelling.

Notes to editor

The British Skin Foundation & the CTPA commissioned a survey through the **Skin Health Alliance** of 502 male and female UK residents in April 2018.

The **British Skin Foundation** is the only UK charity dedicated to raising funds for all skin disease research including skin cancer. Our unwavering commitment to funding quality research means we won't stop until we've found cures for common skin problems like eczema and acne through to potential killers like malignant melanoma. To date we've raised £16 million to fund research projects since 1996.

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The Cosmetic Toiletry & Perfumery Association is the UK trade association representing the cosmetic, toiletry and perfumery industry. The Association's role is to advise its member companies about the strict legal framework for cosmetics, to represent industry views to the UK Government, external stakeholders and help promote information to the media on issues relating to the safety of cosmetics products. CTPA has a dedicated consumer website that clearly explains the science behind cosmetic products – www.thefactsabout.co.uk with information on black henna temporary tattoos as well as a [Youtube video](#) highlighting black henna case studies.

Find the CTPA on [Twitter](#)

For further information, interviews and images please contact:

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BSFcharity

Britishskinfoundation.org

Highlights from the British Skin Foundation summer skin survey

Black henna

- 80% were unaware that paraphenylenediamine (PPD) is illegal for skin contact products in the UK and Europe
- 20% of children have had a black henna tattoo in the past
- 20% of adults have had a black henna tattoo in the past
- Three quarters of people are not aware that black henna tattoos contain PPD
- Three quarters of people are not aware that when PPD is used on the skin it can be dangerous
- Three quarters of people are unaware that having a BHTT can drastically increase the risk of allergic reaction when using a hair dye
- 10% of people know someone who has had a reaction to a black henna tattoo

Sun safety

- Of those who use sunscreen in the UK, three in five people are using SPF 30 or higher
- More than three quarters of those surveyed who use sunscreen abroad opt for SPF30 or higher
- Seven out of ten of people surveyed with children use SPF 30 or higher on them in the UK
- Only one in ten parents do not put sunscreen on their children in the UK at all
- Some three quarters of parents use SPF30 or higher on their children when abroad

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- Less than one in ten of people opt not to use sunscreen on their children whilst abroad
- The British public now seek sun safety advice from reputable sources. Sensibly, more than three in five people surveyed trusted sun and skin information from dermatologists
- One in ten people trusted information from journalists and beauty magazines
- Only one in ten trusted information from consumer affairs organisations
- The top influences when choosing a sunscreen were the SPF and the level of UVA/UVB protection, with three in five people stating these factors as important
- 86% of sunscreen users appear to understand sunscreen labelling
- Two in three people complain that it's messy
- Cost was also a major factor with a third of those surveyed stating that the price of sunscreen affected their buying habits