

A person is relaxing on a green beach chair on a sandy beach. They are wearing a yellow shirt and dark shorts. A large, colorful beach umbrella with shades of red, green, and blue is open behind them. In the background, there are palm trees and a person walking on the beach. The overall scene is a sunny, tropical beach setting.

# Natural Sunscreen and Sunburn Protection

With summer, comes the wonderful sun, outdoor activities, and lots of vitamin D. While it can be nice getting a tan, getting a sunburn is something else entirely.

You need to be extra careful when spending prolonged hours in the sunshine, even if you don't burn easily. It is essential that you use sun protection on your skin, and also that you treat a sunburn if you get one.

Instead of using regular store-bought products that might not have the best ingredients, you can turn to alternative methods. Here are some tips for natural sunburn relief and sun protection.

### **Ingredients For Natural Sunscreen**

If you want to try natural sunburn and sun protection products and remedies, the first thing to consider is what ingredients should be in your sunscreen. There is nothing wrong with going for a store-bought sunscreen if you don't feel confident in making your own DIY option, but you should look very closely at the ingredients.

You can still get a natural, organic sunscreen from the health store or drug store. Just make sure it has adequate protection for the sun's UV rays, and that it doesn't contain a lot of additives or chemicals you don't want to put on your body.

Here are some ingredients to look for in your natural sunscreen:

**Zinc Oxide** – This is going to be one of the top ingredients to include in your natural sunscreen, whether making it yourself or looking for a good store-bought option. Zinc oxide is a type of mineral that occurs naturally, and can help reduce the UVA rays, which cause cancer, along with the UVB rays, which burn the skin. This creates a type of mineral sunscreen that helps to coat your skin and protect it.

**Oils** – There are a few healthy oils that your natural sunscreen might have. Not only do these do great things for your skin and complexion, but they contain a good amount of sun protection as well. A popular one is coconut oil, which may have some SPF properties. Others you might want to use are sesame oil, sunflower oil, and jojoba oil. These latter ones are also good carrier oils, so you use them with essential oils on your skin. .

**Shea Butter** – Shea butter is an active ingredient in many natural beauty and body care products, including natural sunscreen. This also gives your own homemade sunscreen a nice cream-based texture similar to other types of sunscreen.

## **Essential Oils to Help Relieve Your Sunburn**

Even with proper sun protection, you might still end up with a sunburn, whether because you missed a few spots, did not re-apply, or you have very light skin that burns easily. In this case, you can find relief naturally with the right essential oils.

Since your burned skin is going to be very sensitive, once again avoid the citrus essential oils. These are going to be too harsh on your burning skin. Instead, try some of the following oils instead:

### *Lavender*

Lavender is by far one of the most popular and commonly used essential oils. It is very calming and soothing. It can almost instantaneously provide relief for your burned skin. You will notice the redness is reduced along with lowering how much the burn is stinging your skin.

### *Peppermint*

Peppermint is another wonderful essential oil for your skin. This essential oil can soothe the sunburned areas of skin while making it feel cool, similar to the sensation of aloe on the burn. It is also an analgesic, which is what helps to reduce pain.

In addition to these primary essential oils, these others are good options for sunburns:

Chamomile  
Tea Tree  
Geranium

### *Use Carrier Oils*

Any time you are going to use essential oils on your skin, you need to make sure it is diluted with water or oil. For essential oils used in the bathtub or in DIY beauty products, it is already being naturally diluted. However, when applying it directly to your skin, it must contain a carrier oil like jojoba oil. Pure essential oils on their own are too harsh for your skin, especially if they are being applied to a burn.

## **Soothe a Burn With These Herbs**

The next natural remedy you can use for your sunburn are herbs. The great thing about using herbs is that they are not only easy to find, but you can grow them yourself right in your own home. The main benefit to this of course is that they are always at your disposal. That way you aren't having to go to the store for fresh or dried herbs when you're already miserable from your sunburn.

Here are some herbs that can help provide a soothing sensation for your sunburn and help it to heal more quickly:

## *Aloe*

Naturally, the first healing plant that is on this list is the aloe plant. Aloe has big leaves that contain a substance called aloe vera. It is a gel-like consistency that can be used directly on a burn to cool it off and provide some pain relief. Aloe also helps to reduce inflammation and speed up the healing process. It can be used on mild and moderate sunburns.

## *Calendula*

Calendula is another herb that has some healing properties, which is perfect for a sunburn. With calendula, it is going to reduce inflammation on your skin and help new skin cells to grow. This helps the sunburn to heal more quickly.

## *St. John's Wort*

Many people know St. John's Wort as a natural remedy for depression, but this herb can also be used to treat mild sunburns. It is not the dried herb you will use, but oil extracted from this plant to help with your burn.

Herbs can be used in different ways for your sunburn, from helping with healing by drinking herbal tea, to using dried or fresh herbs added to creams and gels for your skin. In the next section, we will delve deeper into some homemade sunburn relief products you can make right at home.

## **After-Sun Relief Sprays and Gels**

If you want to use your own homemade products when you get a sunburn, you will be pleased to know they are not difficult to make. Just consider the natural ingredients that are good for sunburns and create your own concoction. Here are some sprays and gels you can make for relieving a sunburn.

### *Lavender Peppermint After-Sun Spray*

This first DIY product is a type of spray, which is good just after you have gotten a burn, and don't want to rub anything on it. Even rubbing aloe vera gel on burned skin can be painful. This spray can just be sprayed on your skin, where it will be quickly absorbed so no rubbing is necessary.

The two main ingredients you are using are lavender essential oil and peppermint essential oil. You can decide how much to use, but aim for equal amounts. About 15-20 drops of each one for a 4-5 ounce spray bottle should be good. The rest of the bottle simply needs to contain water.

Just add the drops to a spray bottle of water and spray it on your burn. Repeat as often as needed to find relief for your burn.

### *Aloe and Essential Oil Gel*

This is a good option when you feel comfortable rubbing something on your burn. Aloe vera gel is one of the best things you can use for your skin, but you don't need to use a drug store option. If you have access to pure aloe vera or you have a plant in your backyard, you can make your own gel.

Just get a small bowl and combine pure aloe vera gel with essential oils like lavender and peppermint. Mix them together, then add the mixture to a small jar. This can be kept in the refrigerator so it is nice and cool on your burned skin.

### *Soothing Herbal Sunburn Salve*

This salve is a cream-based consistency and will soothe your burn while also helping it to heal. It uses a combination of oil, essential oil, and herbs. You want to start with your pure aloe vera gel, then add some lavender essential oil, coconut oil (not melted), avocado oil, and witch hazel extract. Mix it together and use this salve on your sunburn.

### **Additional Remedies For Sunburn Relief**

In addition to these different natural remedies mentioned for your sunburn and to protect your skin from the sun, there are a few other natural products you might want to consider.

#### *Coconut Oil*

The first natural remedy is coconut oil, which you might have noticed is also in some different DIY sun relief salve products. Coconut oil can be used in its original creamy consistency or melted. Coconut oil is great for your skin, not only healing the skin cells, but reducing pain and providing hydration you might be missing.

#### *Cucumber*

When you have a sunburn, what you probably want the most is something cooling that is going to soothe your burned skin. That is where cucumbers come in. This is by far the most cooling of vegetables, whether you use it on your skin or you eat it. For a sunburn, you can cut a cucumber into slices and place the flesh of the cucumber directly on your burned skin.

#### *Apple Cider Vinegar*

Don't forget about the magical power of apple cider vinegar. You have probably seen this on many lists talking about natural products for all sorts of things, from digestion to burning belly fat. Apple cider vinegar has a very long list of health benefits for you.

When using apple cider vinegar on your skin to relieve and heal a sunburn, you just need to make sure you dilute it. This is a vinegar, so it does have a high acidic property that might hurt if it isn't diluted with water first. It can also be added to some of your other homemade natural sunburn remedies.

Don't forget to reduce sun exposure and cover up if you are going to go outside when you have a sunburn. Your skin is now much more sensitive and can continue burning more severely.

For a 2<sup>nd</sup> degree burn, where you have big blisters on your burn, you need to go to a doctor for medical attention.