

# Save Your Eyes!

By Brenda Fishbaugh

**D**id you know that the earth's ozone layer is what keeps us from burning up? There's a hole in the ozone layer, and as it continues to grow, the sun's ultraviolet radiation that reaches the earth will be less and less filtered. This is just one of the many ways your eyes can be overexposed to ultraviolet light.

When your eyes are sunburned it is called Photokeratitis. Yes, you can

a UV session. You may also remember feeling like you had sand in your eyes. That wasn't sand – that was your cornea peeling! Your eyeball doesn't tan like your skin does; it just peels!

Photokeratitis is the No. 1 reason indoor tanners visit the ER after a single UV tanning session. The good news is that corneal burns can be treated, and the pain can be reduced with prescription numbing drops, as

closing your eyes during a tanning session was enough protection. It's not. Eyelids block less than 25 percent of damaging UV rays.

It is really quite simple. Wear UV-block sunglasses when you're outside in the natural sunlight. And, wear FDA-compliant eye protection any time you're in an indoor tanning unit. The bottom line is not to risk any eye damage while tanning. Simply find a style of eye protection that works for you. There are so many options now – from disposables, to two-piece sets, to goggles with designer patterns and convenient keychains. After all, once you've achieved that perfect, golden glow, you want to be able to SEE it! ■

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actually sunburn your eyeballs!

If you've spent a day at the beach without wearing sunglasses, then you've probably experienced photokeratitis. Likewise, if you've ever tanned indoors without eye protection, you may have burned your corneas (the clear, protective outer layer of the eyeball). You may recall your eyes feeling itchy, red and watery after

well as cold compresses. Antibiotic eye drops are also essential, to keep the eye from developing a serious infection from the open wounds on your cornea.

As bad as an eye burn sounds, the long-term effects of repeated UV overexposure on unprotected eyes are much worse, and in many cases, incurable. Maybe you've always thought



**About the Author:**

Tanning industry veteran Brenda Fishbaugh is president of Eye Pro, Inc., makers of disposable eyewear. She travels extensively training salons on the effects of UV

light on vision.

