

**SLEEP SENSE:** Ages, stages and important patterns

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# (201) family

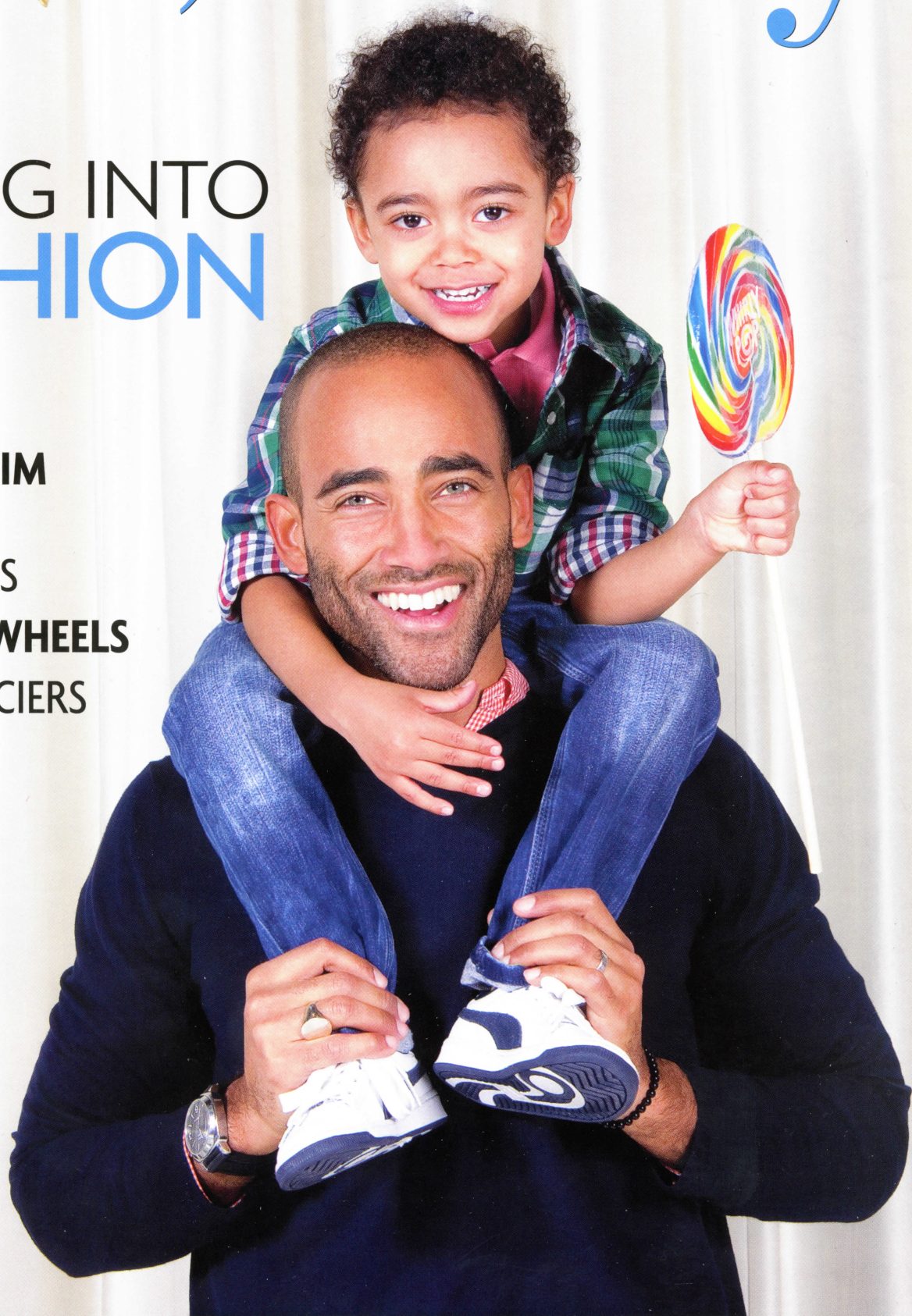
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# skin care

Through the ages

WRITTEN BY LUCY PROBERT

**Y**oung or old, it's always important to be vigilant and protective of skin. From sunscreen to moisturizing to checking for potentially serious medical problems, proper skin care is a family affair.

## Sunscreen

"I wish I could say that with all of the products on the market we've gotten better at protecting skin against sun's harmful rays, but I'm sad to say it's not so," says Dr. Rebecca Baxt, an

assistant clinical professor of dermatology at New York University with a practice in Paramus. Look for an SPF of at least 30 in any sunscreen product and remember that it has to be reapplied every two hours (every hour for swimmers). Baxt recommends looking for either titanium dioxide or zinc oxide as ingredients because they provide the broadest protection. And while sunscreen sprays are all the rage and seemingly simple to use, they must be sprayed on skin *and then* rubbed in.

## Teens and Tanning Beds Do Not Mix!

"Do not allow your teenager to go to a tanning booth," says Dr. Rebecca Baxt. Or grownups for that matter. According to the FDA, women who use tanning beds more than once a month are 55 percent more likely to develop melanoma. Exposure to UV radiation, from the sun or the sunlamps used in tanning beds, increases the risk of developing skin cancer.

If your teen wants to have a bronze glow, direct her to a self-tanning product. She will still need to use a sunscreen to protect from sun damage.

One of the best sun protectors for swimmers and sun lovers of all ages is a swim shirt. Find one with an SPF of 50 and don't worry about constantly applying sunscreen to stomachs, backs and shoulders. And remember, hats with brims are great for protecting vulnerable scalps, noses and cheeks.

## Dry Skin Blues

Who doesn't have dry skin this time of year? The no-brainer treatment for thirsty skin is moisturizing after showering, advises Baxt. After towel drying, slather on a moisturizer all over to help lock in the moisture. Moisturizers basically come in three forms: a lotion, a cream or an ointment. Lotions are easy to use. But if you have very dry skin, use a cream, which is thicker and comes in tubes or jars. For extremely dry skin, try an ointment like Vaseline, which can be greasy and hard to use but very effective.

## Skin Checks

While skin cancer in children is rare, it is always a good idea for parents to check kids regularly for any unusual signs. "With kids, we tend not to remove most moles," says Baxt. "We usually photograph and 'follow' them. If it is something they are born with, they are usually benign." The number one way to avoid any skin cancer in the future, she advises, is to protect children from the sun when they are young.

## Lyme Disease

In the Northeast, Lyme Disease is common, so from May through November, when kids are playing outside, look for ticks on the scalp and skin. Even if you don't find an actual tick or characteristic bulls-eye rash, a rash that won't go away or symptoms as vague as joint pain and fatigue can mean trouble. The best time to do a thorough tick check is after showering.

## Warts

Kids especially are prone to warts on their hands and feet. Baxt advises not allowing children to shower at gyms or pools in bare feet. "Warts are a virus which can be picked up easily, anywhere." ❖