

skin cancers are higher in parts of the world where sunlight is more intense.

## **Nursing Care Management**

Treatment involves stopping the burning process, decreasing the inflammatory response, and rehydrating the skin. Local application of cool tap water soaks or immersion in a tepid-water bath (temperature slightly below 36.7° C [98° F]) for 20 minutes or until the skin is cool limits tissue destruction and relieves the discomfort. After the cool applications, a bland oil-in-water moisturizing lotion can be applied. Acetaminophen is recommended for relief of discomfort. Partial-thickness burns are treated the same as those from any heat source (see earlier discussion on burns).

Protection from sunburn is the major goal of management, and the harmful effects of the sun on the delicate skin of infants and children are currently receiving increased attention. To protect skin exposed to the sun for extended periods, skin should be covered with clothing, and FDA-approved sun protection agents should be applied. Two types of products are available for sun protection: (1) topical sunscreens, which partially absorb UV light; and (2) sun blockers, which block out UV rays by reflecting sunlight. The most frequently recommended sun blockers are zinc oxide and titanium dioxide ointments.

Sunscreens are products containing a sun protection factor (SPF) based on evaluation of effectiveness against UV rays. Most sunscreens have an SPF ranging from 2 to more than 30; the higher the number, the greater the protection. For example, if individuals normally burn in 10 minutes without a sunscreen, use of a sunscreen with SPF 15 allows them to remain in the sun 15 times 10, or 150 minutes ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours) before acquiring the same degree of burns. The most effective sunscreens against UVB are *p*-aminobenzoic acid (PABA) and PABA-esters. However, many individuals are allergic to PABA, and sunscreens without PABA are encouraged to prevent these reactions in children.

Sunscreens are applied evenly to all exposed areas, with special attention to skin folds and areas that might become exposed as clothing shifts. Avoid eye contact. Parents are directed to read labels of sunscreen products carefully for the SPF and follow the manufacturer's directions for application.