

**▶ you probably know that the sun** is the leading cause of skin cancer (not to mention wrinkles and brown spots), so hopefully you're already shielding yourself from its rays. But you shouldn't stop there. New research shows that a few simple lifestyle changes can further reduce your odds of becoming one of the million new cases this year. To make it easy, we put together a 24/7 protection plan—follow it to stay healthy (and hold onto your youthful air) for years to come.

## IN THE A.M.

**Morning is the time to prepare your skin for battling a day's worth of ultraviolet rays.**

### ● **Serve up a better breakfast**

Start the day with a glass of pomegranate juice and top your cereal or yogurt with fresh blueberries; both fruits are high in antioxidant anthocyanins and vitamin C. A diet rich in antioxidants has been proven to help your body defend itself against the damage UV rays can do to your skin cells (i.e., cause mutations in your DNA that lead to skin cancer). Then indulge in that midmorning latte; it has cell-protecting benefits too. "Coffee contains some little known but powerful antioxidants, including caffeic and chlorogenic acids," says Donald Hensrud, M.D., chair of the division of preventive medicine at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. To avoid the jitters, Hensrud suggests sticking to two cups a day.

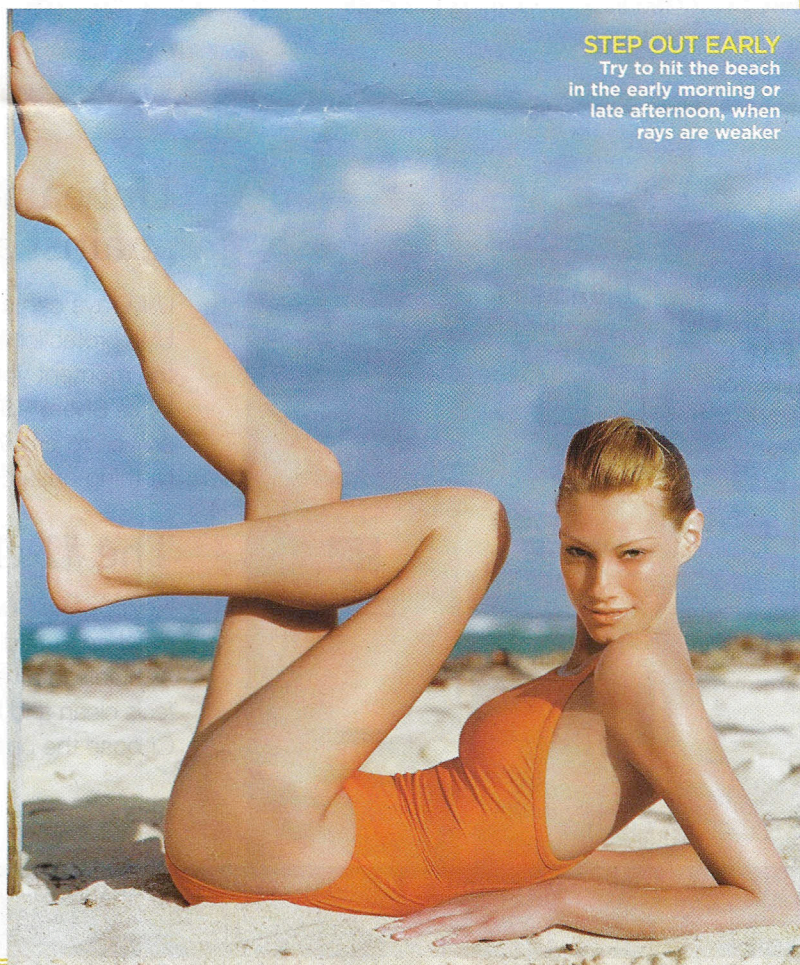
### ● **Supplement your protection**

Researchers have found that taking the extract of the South American fern *Polypodium leucotomos* (PL) in supplement form can help halt UV-induced skin damage and skin cancer. "In human studies, PL has been shown to decrease inflammation and prevent cellular mutations and photoaging," says Leslie

Baumann, M.D., a Miami Beach dermatologist. Because PL pills, such as **Heliocare** (\$53 for 60 capsules; *amazon.com*), are expensive, Baumann recommends downing three tablets an hour before heading out in the sun (as she does before playing a round of golf), rather than taking them

daily. A newer, less costly version that may be as effective: **SunPill** (\$20 for 30 tablets; *sunpill.com*), which also contains PL.

● **Aim for a D** There's a lot of buzz about vitamin D (sometimes dubbed "the sunshine vitamin") these days. Simply put, exposure to UVB rays makes our bodies produce this nutrient, which is said to help prevent many types of cancer. But lest you think that gives you an excuse to spend your days at the beach or on a tanning bed (which increases your risk for the deadliest type of skin cancer, melanoma, by 75 percent if used in your youth), dermatologists are quick to point out that there are better ways to get your D.



**STEP OUT EARLY**  
Try to hit the beach in the early morning or late afternoon, when rays are weaker