

## Mayo Clinic Minute: Keep your eyes and skin safe during the total solar eclipse

On April 8, 2024, North America will experience a total solar eclipse, stretching across parts of Mexico, the U.S. and Canada, with approximately 31.6 million people living in the path of totality. According to NASA, every contiguous state in the U.S., along with parts of Alaska and Hawaii, will witness at least a partial solar eclipse.

[Dr. Dawn Davis](#), a dermatologist at Mayo Clinic says with all eyes toward the sky, it's important to protect your eyes and your skin from UV light damage. You'll need eye protection with special-purpose solar filters for viewing and to take precautions to safeguard your skin from the sun's rays during long periods outside.

And when it comes to protection, she says sunscreen is for the skin only – never for the eye itself.

Video	Audio
	A total solar eclipse is when the moon completely blocks the sun, temporarily darkening the sky. Looking directly at the sun can cause damage to the retina due to the strong amount of UV light.
Dawn Davis, M.D. Dermatology Mayo Clinic	"If you would like to see the solar eclipse, you will need to have special solar eclipse glasses."
	While it's crucial to protect your eyes with ISO-approved solar eclipse glasses — Dr. Dawn Davis cautions people never to put sunscreen directly on their eyes.
	"You cannot put sunscreen on your eyeballs, sunscreen is only for the skin."
	She says lotion can cause chemical irritation and possibly damage.
	"While we're spending time making sure that we protect our eyes during the solar eclipse, which is extremely important, it's important to remember that your skin is also vulnerable to the UV light."
	Along with the proper eyewear, consider wearing a broad-brimmed hat and using a sunscreen with SPF 50.

	"I would reapply every two hours at minimum. And if you happen to sweat or get wet, I would reapply immediately."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Joel Streed.

**TAG:** Visit the [American Astronomical Society](#) for a listing of reputable vendors of approved safety eclipse glasses.

Learn about [pinhole and optical projection](#) for alternative safe viewing options.

Read [more](#) about the total solar eclipse from NASA.