

"If the sunscreen feels sticky in a particular weather, add a dot of Calamine to it. It will absorb the stickiness. If the skin feels dry, add a dot of oil-free moisturiser,"

says, *Dr Jamuna Pai*

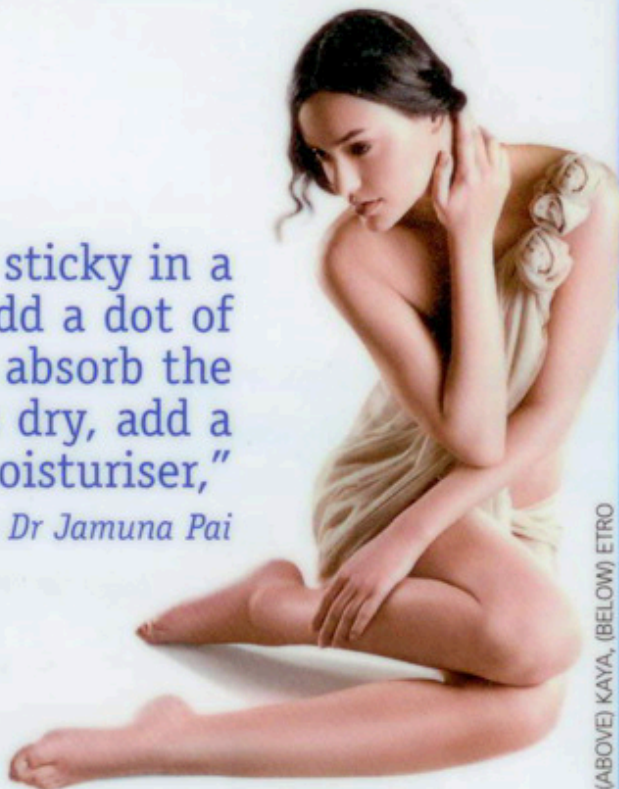
rays penetrate deep into the skin and are the major source of early ageing and skin cancer. UVB rays primarily access the surface of the skin and are the key source of sunburns. Chronic changes such as premature ageing of the skin, hyper/hypo pigmentation usually appear after prolonged sun exposure over the days or years.

"These changes are a result of ultraviolet radiation present in the sunlight, which has profound effects on the various layers of the skin, and its components, such as epidermis, dermis and their components like collagen, elastin and cells like melanocytes," explains Dr Mohan Thomas, Senior Cosmetic Surgeon, Breach Candy Hospital, Mumbai.

## THE ABC RULES OF BEING SUN-SAFE...

**A**void sun exposure: The most obvious way to be sun-safe is to avoid exposure to the harsh sun rays. Michelle Peck, Hollywood facialist and a name behind Madonna's ageless beauty, strongly feels

advises Dr Thomas. For dry skin, use a creamy formulation, while for an oily face use non-greasy or gel-based sunscreens. For easy application, you could try sun-sprays. "If the sunscreen feels sticky in a particular weather, add a dot of Calamine to it. It will absorb the stickiness on the skin. If the skin feels dry, add a dot of oil-free moisturiser," suggests Dr Pai. Make sure you apply it not just on the face, but also on the neck, ears, hands and even feet. The sunscreen has to be used not just when the sun is blazing hot, but also when it is cloudy or snowy, as all these conditions deflect



PICTURES COURTESY: (ABOVE) KAYA, (BELOW) ETRO

## DEALING WITH SUN DAMAGED SKIN

**TANNING:** Tanning is the skin's defence mechanism against solar radiation. A tan is the result of the production of melanin as a result of exposure to ultra-violet rays. Tanning does give the skin a certain degree of protection, but is not sufficient to prevent solar damage. Prolonged exposure over the years will result in the appearance of pigmented patches, abnormal skin texture, wrinkles and sagging of the skin.

**PREVENT & REPAIR:** Exposure to the sun should be avoided as much as possible, especially between 9 am to 4 pm, when the radiations are strongest. The sunscreen blocks the sun's rays and should be applied every three to four hours, regardless of the SPF number. Use a moisturiser that contains Vitamin C, a powerful anti-oxidant and Kojic acid, as these repair sun-damaged skin.

**PIGMENTATION:** Hormonal changes and exposure to sun are the two main reasons of uneven, toned dark patches on the face. **PREVENT & REPAIR:** A physician will give you lightening creams to apply at bedtime, all the more reason to apply sunscreen to prevent darkening of the treated area. Soft gel peels can be used at short intervals to help lighten pigmentation. The azelic acid peel works wonders and gives more than 60-70 per cent relief in case of stubborn pigmentation. Supplements of Vitamin C and antioxidants help as lightening vitamins. The best way to treat is to prevent the sun exposed area from darkening. Laser therapy can be combined with the peels in certain cases, where the pigmentation has been persistent. Dietary correction or supplements are also recommended in