

Today, the World Health Organization (WHO) and other partners have announced the launch of a new mobile app, SunSmart Global UV app that protects you from the dangers of the sun and promotes public health.

The new free app is available free of charge at both the Apple App and Google Play stores for mobile phones that provide five-day UV and weather forecasts at searchable locations.

It has been launched by the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Labour Organization (ILO).

It highlights time slots when sun protection is required with the aim of helping people around the world know when to use sun protection, in an effort to reduce the global burden of skin cancer and UV-related eye damage.

It provides personalized options so that users can take actions to prevent prolonged, excessive UV exposure, a major cause of skin cancer and other UV related diseases.

The app allows the inclusion of national and local data streams and adaptation to multiple languages – it is currently available in Chinese, English, French, Russian, Dutch and Spanish.

Dr Maria Neira, WHO Director, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Health said, “Evidence shows that overexposure to UV is the major cause of skin cancer. So it’s vital for people to know when and how to protect themselves,”

Globally, it is estimated that over 1.5 million cases of skin cancer (melanoma and non-melanoma combined) were diagnosed globally in 2020.

During the same period, more than 120,000 people across the world lost their lives to this highly preventable disease.

One of the main factors contributing to these cancers is excess UV radiation from thinning of the earth’s stratospheric ozone layer resulting from the release of certain manmade chemicals.

Everyone needs some sun, mainly for the production of vitamin D which helps to prevent the development of bone diseases such as rickets, osteomalacia and

osteoporosis. But too much sun can be dangerous – and even deadly. The summer months hide real danger.