

Patch of thin ozone layer in New Zealand

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New Zealanders are being warned to cover up and use sun block as a patch of thin ozone layer moves across the country.

Levels of ultra violet radiation are expected to increase significantly on Sunday, the Dominion Post reported. While they will be lower than the normal summer levels, they are coming at a time when the country is emerging from winter.

"They're all white and pasty coming out of winter and their skin hasn't been conditioned for high UV," said Greg Bodeker of the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research.

The patch of atmosphere is believed to have broken away from Antarctica, where the ozone layer is permanently thin. The amount of ozone is 23 percent lower than New Zealand's normal winter covering.

Ozone levels will be at their highest in the North Island and in mountainous areas in the South Island.

Bodeker said the ozone-thin patch will move across just like a weather front.

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