

# Why Americans can't buy some of the best sunscreens

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With summer nearly here, U.S. consumers might think they have an abundance of sunscreen products to choose from. But across the Atlantic, Europeans will be slathering on formulations that manufacturers say provide better protection against the sun's damaging rays—and skin cancer—than what's available stateside, according to an article in *Chemical & Engineering News* (C&EN), the weekly newsmagazine of the American Chemical Society.

Marc S. Reisch, a senior correspondent at C&EN, reports that sunscreens on the U.S. market do protect users from some ultraviolet-A and -B rays. But there are eight sunscreen molecules approved for use in Europe that could boost the effectiveness of products in the U.S. and also give manufacturers more flexibility in making their lotions. Some have been in line for FDA approval since 2002.

Why the hold-up? In Europe, sunscreen molecules are considered cosmetic ingredients. In the U.S., they are subject to the same scrutiny as over-the-counter drugs, which go through a more rigorous review process than cosmetics. More than 10 years ago, the FDA introduced a streamlined process to speed up the review of sunscreens from overseas to bring them to the U.S. market. But the products' makers are still waiting for approval, and some have given up.

**More information:** Hazy Outlook for U.S. Sunscreen Users, [cen.acs.org/articles/93/i20/De ... till-Wont-Allow.html](http://cen.acs.org/articles/93/i20/De...till-Wont-Allow.html)

Provided by American Chemical Society

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