

Is eating a special ‘lolly’ the new alternative to sunscreen? A nutritionist explains.



BELINDA KIRKPATRICK
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the glow



Most of us find [applying sunscreen](#) kind of like filling up with petrol – a necessary evil. Because, let’s face it, it can be so hard to find the right one.



You know, one that doesn’t make your [skin break out](#), doesn’t cost as much as a meal at a nice restaurant and doesn’t turn your skin whiter than a set of bleached hotel sheets.



So when I read that US company *Sundots* will be releasing the world’s first [sun](#) protection in chewable gummy form, I practically leapt for joy.

Someone had finally managed to solve all of the above issues, and

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campaign has raised 520 per cent over the cash they needed, totalling over \$104,000USD.

it's almost too sexy for our TVs.

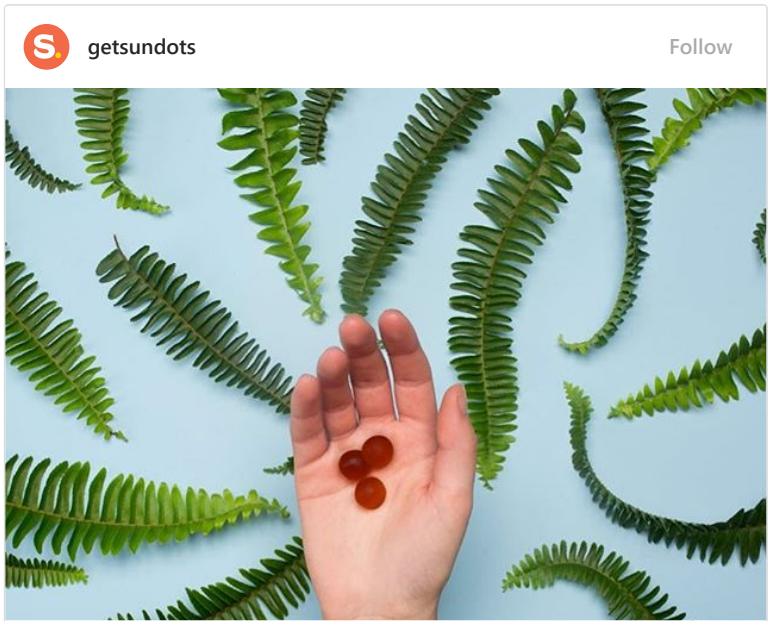
So how exactly do Sundots Sungummies work?

The active ingredient in the gummies they claim helps protect your skin from sun damage is called [polypodium leucotomos](#), which is extracted from a fern native to Central and South America.

According to Sundots, there have been over a dozen [human studies that show](#), when taken every day, the fern “helps to provide all-over protection from sun damage by strengthening your skin cells ability to resist UV harm.”

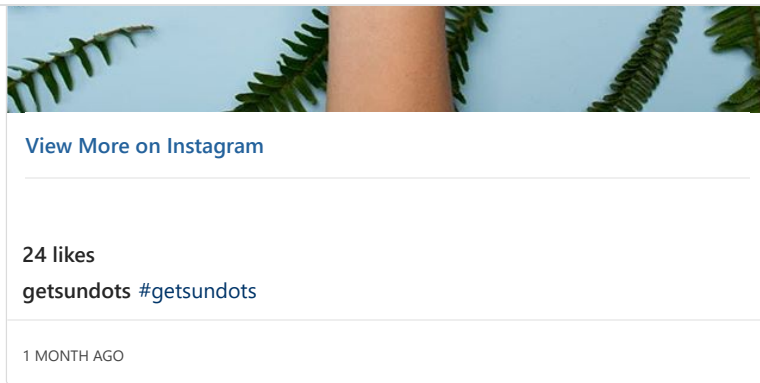
The people behind the gummies have some serious medical chops. [Co-founder Dr Emilia Javorsky](#) is a dermatology researcher at Harvard Medical School and was listed in Forbes 30 under 30 in the Healthcare category.

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So far, so good, right? But then I tend to sit firmly in the camp of, “If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.”

Could this be a repeat of the [Theranos fiasco](#) where founder Elizabeth Holmes (who was at one stage America’s youngest billionaire) over hyped the blood testing company, claiming it could test for hundreds of diseases with a single drop of blood from the finger, except that it couldn’t and now it’s been fined for fraud?

I’m really hoping not, but it’s worth keeping in mind that the studies done are really small, which isn’t great as they don’t always represent what might happen in the majority of people.

One study of only 10 people and showed strong trends that the P leucotomos treatment was helpful, but it wasn’t considered to be statistically significant. Similarly, another study of only 22 people only checked the reaction of the skin immediately after being exposed to the UV light treatment and again 24 hours after the exposure.

This means that to be effective, the Sungummies would need to be consumed every day to infer protection, and let’s face it, most of us are pretty rotten at remembering to take pills daily.

Does having a tanned kid make you a bad parent? This Glorious Mess discusses why parents are being shamed on the beach. Post continues after audio.

This Glorious Mess



LISTEN: Does having a tanned kid make you a bad parent?

06:53

It is also interesting to note that five out of the 10 researchers involved in the study were working for Ferndale Laboratories who sell their own version of Sungummies called Helicocare. This is a potential conflict of interest, which may make the way the results are presented more favourable to the benefits of P leucotomos.

It's also hard to test how effective nature's goodies are as sun protectors. Tomatoes, pomegranate seeds, green tea, berries and cacao are high in antioxidants and compounds called polyphenols that are touted to have sun protection qualities.

Many people also believe that coconut oil (and some other plant oils) has a natural SPF of 4. But studies have shown coconut oil to be closer to SPF 1 and that it is not effective in blocking UV absorption.

Can Sungummies replace sunscreen?

Sundots do advise that the gummies aren't designed to be used alone, rather as a complement to protective clothing and sunscreen.

It's good advice because the reality is we live in Australia, which is to say we live in a country with a sun that shines brighter than Kate

Listen's engagement ring and you need to clip, clip, clip, gummies

potentially toxic chemicals, such as oxybenzone, [which studies that have linked to hormone and thyroid disruption](#), potential contribution to endometriosis in women and also reduced sperm count in men.

Instead, choose a zinc oxide based sunscreen. These sunscreens work by physically blocking the sun's rays (be sure to look for one that doesn't contain nano-particles which can enter the body and that isn't ideal).

Two in three Australians will develop skin cancer before they're 70. Here's how you can protect your skin from the sun. Post continues after video.

Cover up when it's super sunny and be aware that if you don't spend much time in the sun (by choice, skin type or working life), you should get your vitamin D levels checked.

Some of my favourite sunscreens include:

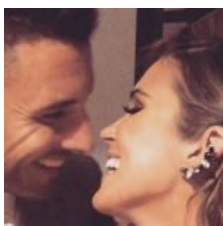
[SIMPLE As That SPF 30 Natural Sunscreen Lotion.](#)

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Belinda Kirkpatrick is a nutritionist, naturopath, author of [Healthy Hormones](#), and creator of [The Seed Concept app](#). Follow Belinda @BKNaturopathy.

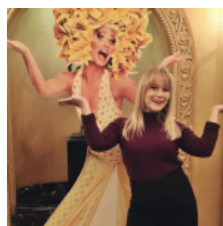
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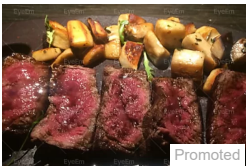
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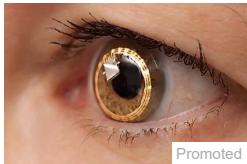
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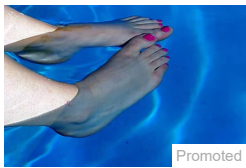
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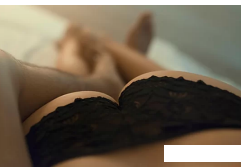
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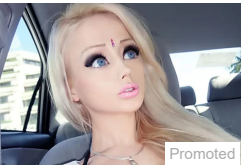
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