

VOGUE



BEAUTY

# Would you ditch your daily sunscreen for a sun protection scarf?

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What is it? Does it really work? We have all the answers



Every beauty editor and dermatologist in the world will wax poetic about sunscreen. It protects your skin from the damage-causing UV rays that can cause scary things like

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sun spots, skin sagging, wrinkles and skin cancer, which clearly explains the obsession. However, most people remain confused about the benefits of sunscreen, and so they forget about it. And some people just plain can't stand it—it can be chalky or slimy, or may even leave a white cast.

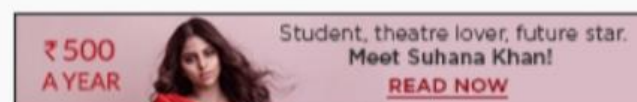
Times have changed though, and there are so many avenues to take sun protection from today. You can tap it on, rub it in, ingest it, drink it and mix it in your morning smoothie—and now, you can even wear it.



When we got a sample of the Tan Ban scarf in the mail, we were chomping at the bit to take it for a spin. To learn more, we spoke to the founder of Skin Project, Meghna Ghodavat (she's also the brains behind the collagen supplements, Skilixir) about sun damage, luxury skincare and her latest innovation.

## What exactly is the Tan Ban scarf and what is it made of?

Tan Ban by Skin Project is a marriage of luxury fashion and skincare. It is made out of natural bamboo and is sustainable and eco-friendly. You'd think that with all this,



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you'd expect gadgets sticking out of the scarf, but it looks like a luxury fashion item.

## When and how should it be used?

It should be used every day. The MET department in India says UV damage is even more in the monsoon, but people typically correlate skin damage to being out in scorching sunlight. UV radiation is present even on non-sunny, cloudy days. The facial skin is where most of our money is spent—trying to save it, protect it and nourish it. Tan Ban will protect and nourish all that it covers—ideally the face, hair, neck and décolletage.


## Why is it better than a generic scarf?

There is no comparison. A generic scarf will give you, depending on its construction, colour and thickness, about 1 per cent or no protection. A thick and dark blanket also lets radiation pass through, even though you're keeping the light out. Tan Ban is the finest in terms of GSM (thickness), feels better than silk and has a cooling effect on the skin; you can actually step out without any worry of skin damage.

## What are the anti-ageing benefits of the scarf?

Many primary signs of ageing are caused to the epidermis by UVB radiation, which show up as dark spots,

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pigmentation, patchy skin and fine lines. UVA radiation wreaks havoc on the dermis, causing the breakdown of collagen, which shows up as wrinkles and sagging skin. The Tan Ban scarf works to protect the skin from 93-98 per cent radiation. Furthermore, the [Vitamin E](#)-infused variant helps to keep the skin supple and soft. A special combination of micro and nano technology has been used to treat the fabric, which enables the percolations of Vitamin E into the blood through the pores of the skin.

## **Tell us more about the design process. Why animals?**

The collection is dedicated to endangered species fighting for a place on earth to exist. The geometric blocks each depict that even a really small effort by us will go a long way in saving these animals. A percentage of the sales also go toward organisations involved in wildlife conservation.

## **Where did the idea of creating wearable sun protection come from?**

Out of a personal need! I have always been obsessed about my skin, always worn a scarf and lathered on sunscreen, right from when I was in school. From that passion stemmed the curiosity to find out what was causing skin damage and premature ageing. However, that didn't seem complete, because I travelled by car a lot, and by the end of it, my skin looked really dull. I figured that just applying

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sticky [sunscreen](#) and wearing a scarf was not enough to protect me. It was a thought that we spend our whole life in clothes, imagine if these clothes could actually nourish and protect our skin whilst we were wearing them!

**There are a lot of innovations in the sun care space in terms of formulations, textures, wearable, edibles, etc. What do you think is the future of traditional sun care?**

I think the best and most sustainable form of sun care is physical protection. Looking at global warming, depletion of ozone, greenhouse emissions, ozone holes in the atmosphere; we are up against some really nasty radiation levels and damage. We need something that is doable, sustainable and safe to use every day when we step out.

**What is your skincare and sun care routine?**

I love experimenting; I'm always in those little drugstores while I travel in [London](#). Holland and Barrett is a favourite. I also love the skincare section at Harrods. But my skincare goals are basic: to prevent and protect. I start my day by alkalising my body and getting some essential fats in, so all the nutrients from the food and supplements I take are well absorbed. I do this by drinking a glass of water with apple cider vinegar, a tablespoon of olive oil and some pink salt. I then drink my collagen (Skilixir) and take Vitamin C,

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D3 and calcium supplements. I put some of my leftover smoothies on my face to get some acids from the fruit in it, and then use a hyaluronic acid gel. I never step out without my Tan Ban! I might sound obsessive, but I love my skin. I'm going to keep those injections and everything artificial at bay for as long as I can.

## **What is your experience of being in the beauty tech space in India?**

It's a very new and exciting space to be in. We learn every day, and we are the first start up in this space in the country. We have a global patent for the fabric, which was pivotal in putting India on the global map for modern fashion innovation. I feel it's always been ancient Ayurveda or traditional Indian wear so far. To do something like this, is a feeling of pride. And I really hope to see more people push limits to put India where it should be in terms of a modern country with phenomenal potential, even in the fashion space.

## **What's next for you? For Skin Project?**

For me, I want to see every scarf and every hijab in the world to be a Tan Ban. At Skin Project, innovation is everything. We have already started research on our next fabric, and it will elevate anti-ageing even further than [what] we have now. Skin Project is looking to get into mainstream fashion and clothing, and we have Skilixir, our



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collagen drink, which was also the first in the country. A lot in the pipeline! Fingers crossed, we really want to put India on the world map as an innovator in luxury fashion and skincare technology.

## Our verdict

I haven't gone a day without sunscreen since January 1, 2015. (Yes, sunscreen application was my New Year resolution.) But yesterday, in the name of beauty research, I forewent my trusty sunscreen for a Tan Ban headscarf on my morning run and... nothing earth-shattering happened. The sky didn't fall, my face didn't burn up or sprout fine lines in the two hours I was out. But, I did feel naked and slightly uncomfortable and tried to dodge the sunny bits as much as I could. I think sunscreen is non-negotiable whether it's sunny, rainy or cold outside. I think it is non-negotiable whether you're wearing makeup or not. And it's definitely non-negotiable even if you're wearing a sun care wearable like this scarf. But, as a sun care accessory, this scarf is brilliant. It is *very* soft, looks bright and reminds me that I'm being proactive about my skin health. It also makes you aware of how much of your body is exposed to the sun, because it takes a lot of movement to get the scarf to cover as much skin as possible. But most of all, it is a reminder of how exciting beauty is getting—each product is more efficacious and each invention is more ingenious, functional and beautiful than the one before it.





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