

Summer Safety Tips

Warmer weather has finally arrived! More injuries occur during the summer months than any other time during the year, but most injuries can be prevented. Here are some tips to stay safe and healthy all summer long:

Sun Safety:

The American Cancer Society promotes the Slip! Slop! Slap! and Wrap! campaign for sun safety:

- "Slip" on a shirt
- "Slop" on sunscreen (at least 15 SPF, with UVA & UVB protection)
- "Slap" on a hat
- "Wrap" on sunglasses to protect our eyes

Make sure to apply a water-resistant sunscreen 30 minutes before going into the sun, try to avoid sun exposure from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and reapply sunscreen every 2 hours. Use sunscreen even on cloudy days, and even if you are dark skinned. Always avoid indoor tanning booths.

Bug Safety:

Use insect repellents containing 10% to 30% DEET. DEET should not be used on children younger than 2 months of age. Repellent with 10% DEET will provide protection for about 2 hours. Apply to exposed skin, but avoid eyes and mouth, and wash the insect repellent off after going inside. If using both sunscreen and insect repellent, apply sunscreen first, then repellent.

Heat Safety:

Playing in the hot sun without water breaks can lead to dehydration, heat exhaustion, or life-threatening heat stroke. If a child feels thirsty, they are likely already mildly dehydrated. Other signs of dehydration include: dry mouth, dizziness, cramps, fatigue, nausea, headache, and dark yellow urine. Children should be reminded to drink often throughout the day. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) advises reducing activities whenever heat and humidity levels are high. The AAP also advises that children should be well-hydrated before prolonged physical activity, and that water is best for the first hour of activity, drinking about every 20 minutes. After an hour of exercise, sports drinks (containing electrolytes) are recommended.

Water Safety:

Never swim alone. An adult should also supervise all kids who are swimming. Swim in designated swimming areas, and never dive into water unless an adult has checked the depth of the water and checked for underwater objects. Swimming pools should be fenced and have self-closing gates. Everyone, even experienced swimmers, should wear a life jacket at all times when boating.

Bicycle Safety:

Always wear a helmet, even on short rides. A helmet should be worn so that it is level on the head and covers the forehead, not tipped forward or backwards. Make sure your helmet is in good repair, without any cracks or signs of damage. A helmet and safety gear should also be worn when riding skateboards, scooters, skates, and ATVs. Make sure the bike is the right size for the child, as

oversized bikes can be dangerous. Always ride in the same direction as the traffic flow, obey all traffic signs, and never ride after dark.

Lawnmower Safety:

The AAP advises that children younger than age 16 should not be allowed to use ride-on mowers, and children younger than 12 should not use walk-behind mowers. Always wear sturdy shoes (not sandals or flip-flops) when mowing, and hearing and eye protection is always recommended.

Fireworks Safety:

Use extreme caution and always have adult supervision with any fireworks, including sparklers. Sparklers can reach temperatures above 1000 degrees Fahrenheit, and can cause burns and scars.

Have a great summer and stay safe!