

Fun Fact of the Week

Top Tips for Summer Health*

by Michelle Sutton-Kerchner

Maximize your fun by taking some precautions against typical summertime health issues ...

You're busy focusing on vacation days, cookouts, and summer camps. Consider this a reminder of the basics. Follow these tips and avoid losing precious time to pesky problems.



Stay Hydrated



Summer heat quickly and easily can cause dehydration. Before heading outdoors, drink down a full glass of water to build your reserves. While active outside, take a water break every 20 minutes. However, even when lounging on the deck or by the pool, you still need frequent water drinks. You also can hydrate from fruit, especially watermelon, grapes, and oranges which are high in water content. Aside from hydrating, water also helps cool down body temperature. Signs of dehydration include sluggishness, headache, and dizziness. If these symptoms hit, retreat to a cool, shady location and slowly, steadily rehydrate with water.

Learn to Swim

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drowning ranks fifth among the leading causes of unintentional injury death in the United States.

It's never too late to replace your fear of the water with healthy respect. The Center welcomes swimmers of all ages to take private, semi-private, or group lessons. Swimming lessons reduce the risk of drowning, especially in young children.



Introduce water activities—to the young and old—in a controlled environment. The Center's indoor Aquatics area provides a contained focus where temperature, water quality, and lifeguarding are not a distraction. This is the perfect setting to familiarize yourself and your kids with the water before diving into a summer of pools, lakes, and oceans.

When boating, tubing, or rafting, always wear a lifejacket. Even good swimmers should be protected from unexpected currents.

Keep Cool

Approximately 618 people in the United States are unnecessarily killed by extreme heat every year. Infants, children, older adults, those with chronic medical conditions, and athletes are at increased risk. Self-awareness is your best prevention against heat illness and heat stroke.

Try to avoid outdoor exercise on hot days. If you must, then decrease the duration and intensity. If you become lightheaded, confused, weak, or feel faint, move to a cool area and get help immediately.

Ask a personal trainer for takeaway exercises to do on vacation. S/he will consider the impact of weather and create a program to accommodate. During the hottest weeks of summer, plan to work out entirely in the Center. Added perk: pool time without any sunscreen. Be smart when supplementing your Center workouts with outdoor activities. Schedule them for early morning or evening when the sun is not as hot. Seek shelter in the shade throughout. Wear lightweight, sweat-wicking fabrics.



No one likes to stay cooped inside on a beautiful summer day. However, extreme heat or low personal-tolerance level might make a trip to the Center, mall, or movie theater a better option. You still get out to enjoy the laid-back vibe of summer while chilling at someone else's AC expense.

Screen Up



Aside from the risk of cancer and prematurely aged skin, sunburn affects the body's ability to cool off. It also contributes to dehydration. Protect yourself by wearing a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen. Protect from all angles.

Use a broad-spectrum screen with UVA/UVB protection of SPF 15 or higher. Apply 30 minutes prior to sun exposure for best results. Continue to reapply as per package instructions, considering water contact, sweating, toweling, and SPF number.

A Toast to Health

Summertime cocktails and spritzers can be refreshing fun. To keep them healthy, alternate each with a full glass of water. This helps prevent dehydration and accidents from careless mishaps (by diluting consumed alcohol). When possible, dilute drinks with seltzer to reduce empty calories. Or, mix in seasonal fruit to add water content. Things are dry enough without alcohol-induced dry mouth. Responsible drinking keeps your waist lean and your brain fit.

Enjoy

Use fitness to fuel your fun. Don't tire out after the first wave, feel guilt over an ice cream cone, or pull your back on the first Frisbee throw. Keep training so you can enjoy the most summer with the least effort.



Before



After

*<http://fitnessandwellnessnews.com/top-tips-summer-health/>