

Healthy Living Newsletter

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Live, Take Charge, Change

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Keeping Kids Active During Summer

- Have a routine, including a regular bedtime and wake-up time, even if the times are a bit later than during the school year.
- Look for ways to encourage your children to play without instituting a formal exercise program.
- On a really hot day, take your kids bowling or roller-skating.
- Look for places in your community that provide safe places to exercise such as the Boys & Girls Club, YMCA, or community center.
- If it is too hot during the day to play outdoors, head to a park after dinner, but before dark.
- Restrict TV and computer access.
- Look for ways your older children can earn money while keeping fit. Maybe they can work as a camp counselor.
- Emphasize that wellness is more than just burning calories. Teach your children the importance of using sunscreen, being social, and keeping the brain engaged.
- Be a role model. Make time to stay fit and your children will learn by your example.
- Walk, walk, walk. It is the most popular form of exercise among adults.

Source: health.discovery.com



Water Safety

You have reached that time of the year when you want to get out and enjoy the great outdoors. The following are some guidelines for general safety around the water:

- ❖ Always swim with a buddy; never swim alone.
- ❖ Know your limits. Watch out for the dangerous “too” – too tired, too cold, too far from safety, too much sun, too much strenuous activity.
- ❖ Teach your children to swim.
- ❖ Never leave young children unattended, even for a minute, in a swimming pool, lake, ocean, or stream.
- ❖ Children and inexperienced swimmers should take precautions, such as wearing a U.S. Coast Guard-approved flotation device when around the water.
- ❖ Learn CPR.
- ❖ Use a feet-first entry when entering the water. Enter headfirst only when the area is clearly marked for diving and has no obstructions.
- ❖ Stay out of strong currents.
- ❖ Pay attention to local weather conditions and forecasts. Stop swimming at the first indication of bad weather.

Sources: www.redcross.org & www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus

Fireworks Safety

The following are tips to help you have a safe fireworks display for the Fourth of July:

- Follow your local and state laws regarding the possession and use of fireworks.
- Never let children handle, play with, or light any fireworks. Only adults should handle and light fireworks.
- Always light fireworks on a hard, flat, level surface in a clear area away from houses, dry leaves, or grass..
- Never ignite fireworks in a container, especially a glass or metal container.
- Have an accessible fire extinguisher, water supply, hose or bucket nearby for emergencies.
- Never re-light a dud firework (wait 15 – 20 minutes and then soak it in a bucket of water).
- Sparklers burn at very high temperatures and can easily ignite clothing. Children can not understand the danger involved and can not act appropriately on the case of an emergency.

Sources: www.cpsc.gov, www.fireworks.com & www.fireworkssafety.com

Foot Problems That Men Should Not Walk Away From

- **Heel pain** – This is often caused by tissue inflammation, but can also result from broken bone, a tight Achilles tendon, a pinched nerve, or other problem.
- **Ankle sprains** - They always require prompt medical attention. Skipping medical care increases the likelihood of repeated ankle sprains and the development of chronic ankle instability.
- **Big toe stiffness and pain** – This usually develops over time, as cartilage in the big toe wears down and eventually leads to arthritis.
- **Achilles tendon** – This causes pain in the back of the foot or heel. This usually is the result of a sudden increase in physical activity. The risk of an Achilles tendon rupture can be reduced by treating the symptoms of Achilles tendonitis.
- **Ingrown toenails** – These can pierce the skin, allowing bacteria to enter the body. A doctor can perform a quick procedure that will stop the pain and permanently cure an ingrown toenail.

Source: www.healthfinder.gov



Protect Yourself Against Food Poisoning

- Use a food thermometer to check that all ground meats are cooked to at least 160 degrees F.
- Wash raw fruits and vegetables with soap.
- Make sure all cooking utensils are cleaned with soap and hot water after being handled.
- Drink only pasteurized milk, juice, or cider.

Source: www.healthfinder.gov



Stop Ticks

While enjoying summer activities like hiking, camping, gardening, or just playing outdoors, don't forget about ticks that may be in the same environment.

Depending on the species, you can find ticks in various environments, often in or near wooded areas. You may come in contact with ticks when walking through infested areas or by brushing up against infested vegetation (such as leaf litter). Ticks also feed on mammals and birds, which play a role in the pathogens they carry.

Tick-borne diseases can occur worldwide. Fortunately, there are some simple steps you can take to protect yourself and your family:

1. **Use a repellent with DEET** (on skin or clothing) **or permethrin** (on clothing) and wear long sleeves, long pants, and socks. Products containing permethrin and can be used to treat boots, clothing, and camping gear, which can remain protective through several washings. Repellents containing 20 percent or more of DEET can be applied to the skin and they can protect for several hours.
2. **Wear light-colored clothing**, which allows you to see ticks on your clothing.
3. **Tuck your pant legs into your socks** so that ticks cannot crawl up inside your pant legs. Some ticks can crawl into shoes and are small enough to crawl through most socks.
4. **Avoid tick-infested areas.** If you are in a tick-infested area, walk in the center of the trails to avoid contact with vegetation.
5. **Check your body for ticks** after being outdoors, even in your own yard.

Source: www.cdc.gov

Lyme Disease

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection, which is one of several maladies that can be transmitted by the bite of an infected tick. It is a bacterial infection that features a *skin rash, often resembling a bulls eye, fever, headache, muscle pain, stiff neck, and the swelling of knees and other large joints*

In early stages, doctors look at your symptoms and medical history to figure out whether you have Lyme disease. In later stages of the disease, lab tests can confirm whether you have it.

Antibiotics usually cure the early stages of the disease. If not treated, the disease can cause problems with joints, heart, and nervous system.

Source: www.nlm.nih.gov

Outdoor Health Tips

Take the following precautions to help protect yourself and your family from rabies:

- Make sure your pets get rabies shots on a regular basis.
- Do not leave garbage or pet food outside.
- Stay away from wild, sick, hurt, or dead animals. Do not pick up or move sick or hurt animals. If you find a wild, sick, or hurt animal, call your county Animal Control office.
- Do not keep wild animals like raccoons, skunks, foxes, coyotes, and wolves as pets. It is not only dangerous, but also illegal.
- Teach your children not to go near, tease, or play with wild animals or strange dogs and cats.

Source: gpc.dhr.georgia.gov

Diabetes Health Toll

Diabetes-related medical and economic costs in the United States hit \$174 billion in 2007.

About one out of every five healthcare dollars in the United States is spent caring for someone diagnosed diabetes. In 2006, diabetes caused more than 284,000 deaths in the United States.

It's believed that about 6 million people in the United States have undiagnosed diabetes, which means the actual total cost of diabetes in 2007 may have been much more than \$174 billion.

Source: www.healthfinder.gov



Asthma Facts and Figures

- ❖ Asthma is characterized by inflammation in the air passages resulting in the temporary narrowing of the airways that transport air from the nose and mouth to the lungs.
- ❖ There is no cure for asthma, but it can be managed through treatment.
- ❖ Every day in America:
 - **40,000** people miss school or work because of asthma.
 - **30,000** people have an asthma attack.
 - **5,000** people visit the emergency room because of asthma.
 - **1,000** people are admitted to a hospital because of asthma.
 - **11** people die from asthma.

Source: *Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America*

Hospital Stays

What to bring to the hospital

- Insurance and Medicare cards, living will, and medical power of attorney.
- Several lists of medications you take, with dosages, including over-the-counter drugs such as aspirin and vitamins. Information should include drug allergies and sensitivities to foods or medicines.
- Comfortable, loose-fitting clothes and shoes.
- Notebook and pencils or pens.
- Hand sanitizer.
- Personal items such as books, magazines, soap, toiletries, and family photos.

What to leave at home

- Jewelry, watches or other valuables, large amounts of cash, and credit cards..

In your best interests

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1.7 million Americans develop hospital acquired infections each year, and about 100,000 of them die. To cope with reality, keep a bottle of hand sanitizer on your bedside table in case hospital workers do not use soap and water. Tape a handwritten sign next to the sanitizer that says, "Protect me from germs...clean your hands." The sign can also remind staffers to wash or change gloves before touching you. If they forget and you are reluctant to keep reminding them, having a sign is less awkward than asking each person to wash.

Write things down

A notebook and pen are good for writing down which doctors saw you and when, what prompted the visits, and what was said. The notebook also is good for recording diagnostic tests, which include the test names, date, and outcomes.

Being in the hospital is not fun, but if you prepare in advance you will not feel helpless.

Source: www.cdc.gov & www.ajc.com



Drowsy Driving

Summer is normally highlighted by vacations, which in many cases means time on the road traveling to see family, friends, and distant destinations. One of the factors that you need to be aware of is long hours on the road can lead to drowsy driving. Just like drugs and alcohol, sleepiness slows reaction time, decreases awareness, and impairs judgment. Drowsy driving can be fatal.

- 37% of drivers surveyed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration admitted to falling asleep at the wheel at some point in their driving career.

Safety Tips

- Maintain a regular sleep schedule that allows adequate rest.
- When signs of fatigue begin to show, get off the road. Take a short nap in a well-lit area. Do not simply stop on the side of the road.
- Avoid driving between 12 midnight and 6 a.m.
- Share driving responsibilities with a companion.
- Stop every 100 miles to two hours to get out of the car and walk around; exercise helps to combat fatigue.

Source: www.nsc.org

Proper Lifting Techniques

Use proper lifting techniques to protect yourself from possible injury. When lifting objects from a position below your waist, use a wide stance and slight bend at your hips and knees. Tighten your stomach as you lift and keep your back as flat as possible – do not arch or bend it. When carrying heavy items, keep them as close as possible to your body. Do not carry items on only one side of your body.

Source: www.healthfinder.com



Computers and Your Eyes

What can you do to prevent eyestrain while looking at your computer?

You can prevent eyestrain by making changes to your computer workspace and by visiting your eye doctor. Suggestions on how to make your workspace more comfortable:

- Place the screen 20 to 26 inches away from your eyes and a little bit below eye level.
- Use a document holder next to your computer screen.
- Change your lighting to lower glare and harsh reflections. Glare filters over your computer screen also can help.
- Get a chair you can adjust.
- Choose screens that can tilt and swivel. A keyboard that can adjust is also helpful.

Source: www.preventblindness.org



Back Pain Prevention

At some point in their life, back pain affects 80 percent of Americans. Each year, Americans pay almost \$24 billion for treatment of back pain, limited mobility, and stiffness.

The following are tips for helping to prevent and reduce back pain:

1. Identify and correct body stresses such as poor posture, improper lifting techniques, or weak or tight muscles.
2. Increase your muscle mobility by stretching or doing activities – such as yoga, tai chi, swimming, or pilates.
3. Boost your strength by doing exercises that involve the whole body.
4. Do aerobic exercise, like walking, swimming, and running, for at least 20 minutes three times a week.
5. Practice good posture.
6. When standing, keep your head up, shoulders straight, chest forward, and stomach tight. Use your legs, not your back, when pushing or pulling heavy items.
7. Sleep on a firm mattress and box spring that do not sag. Sleep in a position that allows you to maintain the natural curve in your back.
8. Maintain / adapt a healthy lifestyle. Obesity and smoking increase the incidence of back pain.

Source: www.healthfinder.com



Most Americans Have Poor 'Eye-Q'

Contact lenses are among the safest forms of vision correction when patients comply with care and wearing instructions provided by their eye doctor. Because lenses are so comfortable, it is easy for people to get careless. However, the consequences may be dangerous, and failure to follow proper contact lens hygiene could lead to damage.

Results from a recent survey of 1,000 people indicate:

1. Among contact lens wearers, 79 percent admitted to practicing poor contact lens hygiene on a regular basis, including showering, swimming, and sleeping in contacts not approved for overnight wear.
2. Only 32 percent of respondents who wear contact lenses said they change their case every one to three months as recommended, and 17 percent said they never change their lens case.
3. Fewer than half (45 percent) knew that pregnant women may need to change their corrective lens prescription.
4. Most respondents (64 percent) knew that diabetes can be detected through a comprehensive eye exam, and (41 percent) knew that people with diabetes need to have an eye exam at least once a year.