

# Healthy Living Newsletter

June 2008

*Live, Take Charge, Change*

Volume 3, Number 06

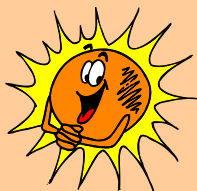
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Corporate Campus Health &  
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## Vacation Health Reference

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), or the U.S. State Department's Overseas Citizens Services web sites maintain updated advisories and immunization requirements for travelers to all parts of the world. It's best to find out about what immunizations that you will need at least six weeks in advance. That's because it may take several weeks for immunity to develop, and you may need more than one dose of the vaccine for full protection.

Source: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)



## What SPF number is right for you?

The lighter your skin is, the higher your SPF protection needs to be. Light-to-medium skinned people should use at least 30, but preferably 45, especially during great exposure to the sun during the peak hours of 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Darker skinned people should use at least SPF 15. SPF 15 filters at least 93 percent of the UVB rays; 30 SPF filters 96 percent of the UVB rays; and 45 SPF filters 97 percent of the UVB rays.

UVA rays penetrate the ozone more easily than UVB rays and can penetrate the dermis (second layer of skin). UVB Rays are more responsible for the sunburn reaction, but can also cause premature aging and skin cancer.

Source: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)



## Vacation Health Tips

When preparing for a vacation, there are many things that need to be considered, including your health care needs while you are away from home. The following are some tips to consider before leaving:

- ❖ Take a basic first aid kit. The kit should include pain relievers, antibiotic ointment, anti-diarrhea medication, and bandages. Also, pack sunscreen, extra prescription eyewear, and motion sickness medication, if you use it.
- ❖ Take insurance ID cards.
- ❖ Bring hand wipes and hand sanitizers.
- ❖ If you are taking prescription medications, talk to your health care provider before leaving. Bring extra supplies and divide medications between your carry-on bag and checked luggage in case of loss or theft. Keep prescription drugs in their original bottles with typed labels.
- ❖ Consider traveler's insurance if you are going abroad.
- ❖ Take the name and phone numbers of your pharmacist and health care provider.
- ❖ If you are traveling to another country, research the accessibility and quality of health care there.
- ❖ Protect yourself against deep-vein thrombosis, which occurs when blood clots form in the veins (usually in the legs) and block blood flow. Sitting for a long time on an airplane or train can contribute to DVT, but wearing special compression stockings can help prevent this dangerous condition.
- ❖ Take immunization records, along with other important records, especially when traveling to another country.
- ❖ When traveling to an undeveloped country, make sure that everyone in your party is adequately immunized against any infectious disease you might encounter.

Sources [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/), [mayoclinic.com](http://mayoclinic.com), & [cnn.com/HEALTH/](http://cnn.com/HEALTH/)

## Dealing with Motion Sickness

If you are susceptible to motion sickness, keep the following tips in mind:

- **Focus on the horizon** or on a distant, stationary object. Don't read.
- **Keep your head still**, while resting against a seat back.
- **Do not smoke** or sit near smokers.
- **Avoid spicy and greasy foods and alcohol.** Do not overeat.
- **Take an over-the-counter antihistamine**, such as meclizine (Antivert, Bonine), or one containing dimenhydrinate (Dramamine) at least 30 to 60 minutes before you travel. Expect drowsiness as a side effect.

Source: [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)



### Tip to Relax

#### Get moving! Who said you need quiet to relax?

Pop in your favorite CD or turn to your favorite radio station and dance for a few songs. This will revitalize your body and mind and you will be ready to face anything.



### What's Your Food IQ?

Which of the following represents one serving from the bread and grain group?

- a.) a restaurant-size baked potato
- b.) one bagel
- c.) a ¾ -cup of cornflakes
- d.) a typical side dish of rice
- e.) a dinner plate of pasta

**Answer: c.** It is easier than you might think to achieve the 6 to 11 servings of whole grains per day that form the base of the USDA Food Guide Pyramid. A baked potato from a typical restaurant would be three servings; most bagels are at least two (and often more); a side dish of rice would be two; and pasta, four.

Source: [www.cooklight.com](http://www.cooklight.com)

### Fitness Tips

If you are stuck in a pushup rut, try these two variations:

- First, put your toes on a bench or chair so you're elevated 12 – 16 inches. Pushups done in this position work the upper body muscles differently from standard pushups.
- Second, try the old reliable "military" pushup where you push up forcefully so your hands leave the ground. Clap your hands together, then catch yourself before your chest hits the floor.

Try not to do the exact same routine two days in a row. Walk, swim, play tennis, or lift weights. This works different muscles and keeps exercise more interesting.

Source: [www.activelifestyle.info](http://www.activelifestyle.info)



## Men's Health – Screening Checklist

**Physical Exam:** Review overall health status, perform a thorough physical exam and discuss health related topics.

- (Ages 20 – 39 – Every three years / Ages 40 – 49 – Every two years / Ages 50+ - Every year)

**Blood Pressure:** High blood pressure has no symptoms, but can cause permanent damage to body organs.

- (Ages 20 – 50+ – Every year)

**TB Skin Test:** Should be done on occasion of exposure or suggestive symptoms at direction of physician.

- (Ages 20 – 50+ – Every five years)

**Blood Tests & Urinalysis:** Screens for various illnesses and diseases (Such as cholesterol, diabetes, kidney or thyroid dysfunction) before symptoms occur.

- (Ages 20 – 39 – Every three years / Ages 40 – 49 – Every two years / Ages – 50+ - Every year)

**EKG:** Electrocardiograms screens for heart abnormalities.

- (Age 30 – Baseline / Ages 40 – 49 – Every four years / Ages 50+ - Every three years)

**Tetanus Booster:** Prevents lockjaw

- (Ages 20 – 50+ - Every ten years)

**Rectal Exam:** Screens for hemorrhoids, lower rectal problems, colon and prostate cancer.

- (Ages 20 – 50+ - Every year)

**PSA Blood Test:** Prostrate Specific Antigen is produced by the prostate. Level rise when there is an abnormality such as an infection, enlargement or cancer. Testing should be done in collaboration with your physician.

- (Ages 50+ - Every year)

**Hemoccult:** Screens the stool for microscopic amounts of blood that can be the first indication of polyps or colon cancer.

- (Ages 40 – 50+ - Every year)

**Colorectal Health:** A flexible scope examines the rectum, sigmoid and descending colon for cancer at its earliest and treatable stages. It also detects polyps, which are benign growths that can progress to cancer if not found early.

- (Ages 50+ - Every 3 - 4 years)

**Chest X-Ray:** Should be considered in smokers over the age of 45. The usefulness of this test on a yearly basis is debatable due to poor cure rates of lung cancer.

**Bone Health:** Bone mineral density test. Testing is best done under the supervision of your physician.

- (Ages 60 – Discuss with a physician)

**Testosterone Screening:** Low testosterone symptoms include low sex drive, erectile dysfunction, fatigue, and depression. Initial screening for symptoms with a questionnaire followed by a simple blood test.

- (Ages 40 – 50+ – Discuss with a physician)

Source: [www.menshealthnetwork.org](http://www.menshealthnetwork.org)

## Hotel Fire Safety

Would you know what to do if there was a fire emergency?

- After checking into a hotel, always find the exits and fire alarm closet to your room.
- Review the hotel's safety information in your room.
- If there is a fire outside of your room, always feel the door before opening it. If it is hot, do not open it and telephone for help.
- If you leave your room, take your room key with you so that you can get back into your room if the nearest exit is blocked.
- If you are forced to stay in your room, telephone for help, turn off the air conditioning and heating systems, and open your window slightly for ventilation.
- To help keep smoke from entering your room, soak sheets and towels and stuff them under the door.
- Stay close to the floor for the freshest air and hold a wet washcloth over your face.
- Do not attempt to run through smoke or flames.
- Do not use any elevators during the fire. They are electrical and could shut down, trapping you inside. Use the stairs.

Source: [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus)

## Distracted Driving

**Driven to distraction? Focus on driving to reduce risks.**

- ❖ The time to adjust your mirrors, radio, or temperature control is before you pull out of the driveway – not while you are driving.
- ❖ Your vehicle is **not** a portable salon.
- ❖ Enjoy your meals at home or in a restaurant – not on the go.
- ❖ Going someplace new? Plan your route ahead of time. If you need to refer to a map, park the car or ask a passenger to help you navigate.
- ❖ For cell phone conversations, pull over to the side of the road or wait until you reach your destination.
- ❖ Never answer or dial a cell phone in hazardous conditions.

Source: [health.discovery.com](http://health.discovery.com)

## Lightening



### Lightening Facts

- Lightening occurs in all thunderstorms; each year lightening strikes the earth an average of 20 to 25 million times.
- Lightening can occur from cloud-to-cloud, within a cloud, cloud-to-ground, or cloud-to-air.
- The energy from one lightening flash could light a 100-watt light bulb for more than three months.
- The air near a lightening strike is heated to 50,000 degrees F – *hotter than the surface of the sun!*

### Lightening Safety

- If threatening weather is approaching, move to a sturdy building. Do not seek shelter in small sheds or under isolated trees. Inside the building, stay off corded telephones, computers, and other electrical equipment that would put you in direct contact with electricity. Stay away from pools, indoor or outdoor, tubs, showers, and other plumbing. Buy surge suppressors for key equipment.
- If caught outdoors and no shelter is nearby, find a low spot away from trees, fences, and poles. If you feel your skin tingle or your hair stand on end, squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet. Place your hands over your ears and your head between your knees. Make yourself the smallest target possible and minimize your contact with the ground. **DO NOT** lie down.
- If a person is struck by lightening, call 911 and get medical care immediately. People struck by lightening can suffer from a variety of long-term, debilitating symptoms, including memory loss, attention deficits, sleep disorders, numbness, dizziness, stiffness in joints, irritability, fatigue, weakness, muscle spasms, depression, and an inability to sit for long.
- Remember, if you hear thunder – you are close enough to be struck by lightening.

Sources: [www.lighteningsafety.noaa.gov](http://www.lighteningsafety.noaa.gov) & [www.americanredcross.com](http://www.americanredcross.com)



## Fire Ants

One of the major agents of insect stings in the United States is the fire ant, which comes in the black and red species. The black fire ant first showed up in Mobile, AL in 1918. The red fire ant arrived in the 1930s. They now infest all or part of Alabama, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas. They have also been found in isolated areas of other states, including Arizona, Kentucky, and Virginia. Ants can travel long distances in motor vehicles and in or on soil, plants with roots and soil attached, nursery stock, gravel, grass, sod, hay, wood, or soil-moving equipment.

Fire ants clamp onto their targets with powerful jaws and sting their victims repeatedly. Each sting injects a dose of venom that causes a burning sensation. The stings raise itching blisters that can become infected. In sensitive victims, the stings can cause anaphylactic shock (symptoms include trouble breathing and fainting) or even death.

Treatment for fire ant stings is aimed at preventing secondary bacterial infections, which may occur if the blisters are scratched or broken. Clean the blisters with soap and water to prevent secondary infection. Topical corticosteroid ointments and oral antihistamines may relieve the itching associated with these reactions. Severe reactions require immediate medical attention.

Sources: [www.aphis.usda.gov](http://www.aphis.usda.gov) & [www.meden.com](http://www.meden.com)



## What is Vitamin D?

It is a fat-soluble vitamin, which is produced when ultraviolet rays strike the skin and trigger the vitamin D synthesis. Vitamin D is also naturally present in a few foods, including tuna, eggs, fortified milk, and cod liver oil. It is needed for strong bones and helps boost the immune system.

### How do you get the daily allotment?

You would have to eat 10 bowls of fortified cereal, four glasses of milk, six ounces of tuna, or 16 egg yolks to get your recommended allotment of vitamin D.

### How much vitamin D is enough?

The National Academies of Sciences currently recommends 200 international units (IU) of vitamin D for children and adults up to age 50, and 400 – 600 IU for adults older than age 50. However, researchers now question whether these levels are adequate for optimal health. Most researchers agree that a daily intake of 800 – 1,000 IU would benefit many people – especially those who are at increased risk of vitamin D deficiency, including babies who are exclusively breastfed, older adults, people with darker skin, and people with limited sun exposure.

Source: [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)

## Moles

Moles are growths on the skin. They happen when cells in the skin, called melanocytes, grow in a cluster with tissue surrounding them. Most people have between 10 and 40 moles. A person may develop new moles from time to time.

Moles are usually pink, tan, or brown. They can be flat or raised. They are usually round or oval and no larger than a pencil eraser.

About one out of every ten people has at least one unusual (or atypical) mole that looks different from an ordinary mole. The medical term for these is dysplastic nevi. They may be more likely than ordinary moles to develop into melanoma, a type of skin cancer. Because of this, you should have a healthcare professional check your moles if they look unusual, grow larger, or change in color or outline.

Source: [www.nlm.nih.gov](http://www.nlm.nih.gov)



## “Heat” Emergencies

### Heat Cramps

These are painful, involuntary muscle spasms that usually occur during heavy exercise in hot environments. They are caused by heavy sweating, especially when water is not replaced quickly enough.

### Heat Exhaustion

Symptoms of heat exhaustion often begin suddenly, sometimes after excessive exercise, heavy perspiration and inadequate fluid intake. Symptoms include headache, intense thirst, dizziness, fatigue, loss of coordination, nausea, and impaired judgment.

### Heat Stroke

Heat stroke is a life-threatening condition that occurs when your body temperature reaches 104 F (40 C) or higher. Heatstroke can be brought on by high environmental temperatures, strenuous physical activity, or any other conditions that raise your body temperature. Symptoms include high core temperatures, absence of sweating, red flushed skin, dizziness, headache, nausea, and vomiting. What ever the cause, you will need immediate medical attention to prevent brain damage, organ failure, or death.

### Preventing Heat-Related Emergencies

1. Condition yourself to the weather prior to long durations of physical activity.
2. Maintain body fluids. Hydration must be maintained throughout the course of physical activity.
3. Do not rely on thirst as an indicator of dehydration because your body loses water faster than you realize.
4. Alcohol and caffeinated beverages should be avoided because they are diuretics, which increase dehydration and can interfere with heat loss.
5. Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing.
6. Eat light and stay away from heavy foods. They increase metabolic heat production and also increase water loss. Eat smaller, well-balanced meals more often.
7. Rest Periods – Pace your work activities during high temperatures.

Sources: [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com) & [www.bt.cdc.gov](http://www.bt.cdc.gov)

## Skin Cancer Detection

### Take Steps to Early Detection

1. **Be aware of symptoms.** Pay attention to your body and report any unusual findings.
2. **Follow screening guidelines.** Ask your healthcare provider about recommended screening guidelines.
3. **Discuss risk factors with your healthcare provider.**
4. **Investigate your family’s history of cancer.** If you have a strong history of cancer, you may want to learn more about genetic testing.

### Healthy Living

1. **Eat Healthy** - Include more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains in your diet, and choose meals low in fat and calories.
2. **Exercise** - Include 30 – 40 minutes of activity five or more days a week.
3. **Avoid tobacco** - Do not use tobacco products, including chewing tobacco.
4. **Protect yourself from the sun** - Avoid the sun between 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. While outside, wear a hat, shirt, and pants; also use a sunscreen that is SPF30 or greater.

Source: [American Cancer Society](http://American Cancer Society)