

Health and Wellness:
Keep Safe This Summer

By Laura Jimenez, M.S.W.

Here are some quick tips to keep safe this summer:

- Never leave children alone in or near a pool – not even for a minute!
- Because suction from a pool and spa drain can trap even an adult underwater, do not use a pool or spa if there are broken or missing drain covers.
- Children are especially at risk of having heat exhaustion or heat stroke even while in the water. Remind children to drink often and don't stay in the pool for too long. Heat stroke, also called sunstroke, can be life-threatening. The victim's temperature control system, which produces sweat to cool the body, shuts down. Signs of a heat stroke are hot and red skin, changes in consciousness, a rapid, weak pulse and shallow breathing. The body temperature can climb as high as 105 degrees. With heat stroke, it is important to get the victim to a cool place, wrap wet sheets around the body, fan the person, and call 911
- To protect your skin from short and long-term UVA and UVB rays and potential damage, apply a sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 on sunny and cloudy days. Make sure to reapply the sunscreen every two hours.
- Whenever possible, wear both light-colored and lightweight clothing with one-layer of absorbent material to facilitate evaporation of sweat.
- Avoid combination sunscreen/insect-repellent products because the insect repellent should not be reapplied but the sunscreen needs to be reapplied every two hours. Although it's best to avoid being outside during sunrise and sunset when insects tend to be more active, read about insect-repellent products which contain DEET or Picaridin to make the best choice for you and your family.
- Wear a bike helmet to prevent or reduce injury and even save a life.
- Although you've probably heard it a million times, try to stay out of the sun between the hottest times of the day (10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.) and stay well hydrated throughout the day (even if you're not thirsty) and don't overdo it in the sun.

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