



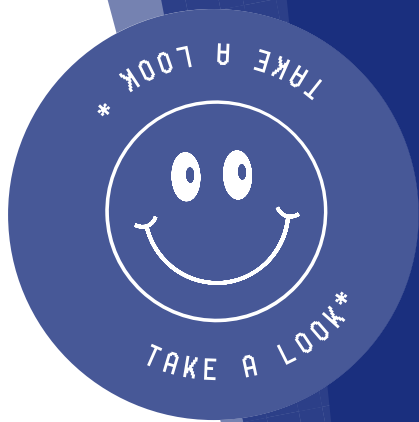
Wellness Committee

Mindful Moment

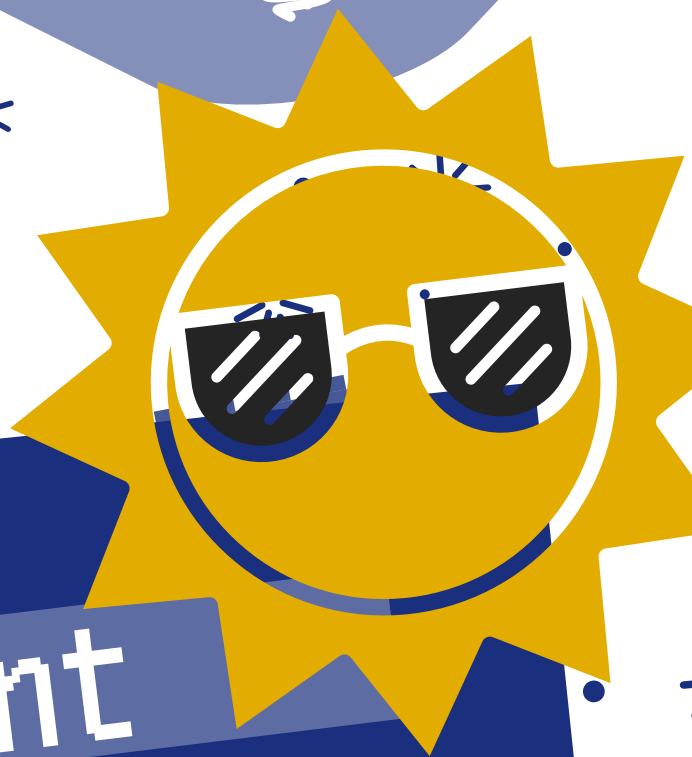
Newsletter

July Wellness Watch: Sun Safety & Outdoor Fun in Florida!

Summer is in full swing - and so is the Florida Sunshine! In this month's Wellness Newsletter, we're focusing on Sun Safety & Outdoor Fun! Whether you are heading to the beach, walking a local trail, or enjoying a backyard BBQ with family and friends, it's important to protect yourself while making the most of the season.



Floridaapco.org



IT'S SUMMER TIME

GET OUTSIDE!

"SUMMER TIME AND THE LIVIN'S
EASY"
-SUBLIME

Summer is here, and it's time to sit back, relax, and enjoy the great outdoors. Whether you're cooling off at a water park or pool, exploring local nature trails and parks, or lying out to work on your tan, make sure you're enjoying the sun while protecting yourself, your family, and even your pets.

ENDLESS SUN, ENDLESS FUN, ENDLESS SUMMER

Living in the Sunshine State means summer feels like it's here all year round—but during the actual summer months, the sun's intensity can be overwhelming. In this guide, we'll explore how to properly protect yourself, how to keep your pets safe, different places around the state to enjoy, the benefits of sun exposure, and how to recognize when you've had too much sun.



KEY SUN PROTECTION STRATEGIES FOR FLORIDA SUMMERS

Sunscreen is Non-Negotiable:

- **Broad-Spectrum:** Always choose a sunscreen that offers "broad-spectrum" protection, meaning it blocks both UVA (aging rays) and UVB (burning rays).
- **High SPF:** The American Academy of Dermatology recommends an SPF of 30 or higher. SPF 30 filters out about 96.7% of UVB rays, while SPF 15 filters out about 93%. For extended outdoor activities, consider SPF 50 or higher.
- **Water-Resistant:** Given Florida's humidity and prevalence of water activities, a water-resistant sunscreen (often rated for 40 or 80 minutes) is highly recommended. Remember that "waterproof" sunscreens don't exist, and reapplication is still essential after swimming or sweating.
- **Application:** Apply generously (about one ounce, or a shot glass full, for your whole body) to all exposed skin at least 15–30 minutes before going outside. Don't forget often-missed spots like ears, neck, scalp (especially if you have thinning hair or a part), lips (use a lip balm with SPF), and feet.
- **Reapplication:** Reapply sunscreen at least every two hours, or more frequently after swimming, sweating heavily, or towel drying.
- **Types:** Lotions are generally easiest to apply, while sprays can be convenient for the scalp. If using a spray, please make sure you apply it directly to your skin and then rub it in for maximum coverage.
- **Physical Blockers:** For sensitive skin or those looking for more environmentally friendly options, sunscreens with zinc oxide and titanium dioxide (physical blockers) are excellent choices as they reflect UV rays.

UVA; AGING RAYS - PENETRATE DEEP INTO THE SKIN

UVB: - RAYS THAT CAUSE SUNBURN AND CONTRIBUTE TO SKIN CANCER

SPF: SUN PROTECTION FACTOR - HOW WELL SUNSCREEN PROTECTS FROM UVB RAYS

UV: ULTRAVIOLET RADIATION

HUMIDITY: A MEASURE OF THE AMOUNT OF WATER VAPOR IN THE AIR. THE HIGHER THE TEMPERATURE, THE MORE WATER VAPOR THE AIR CAN HOLD

Seek Shade, Especially During Peak Hours:

- The sun's UV rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. (or sometimes 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.). Limit your time in direct sunlight during these hours.
- Look for natural shade under trees, use umbrellas (especially on the beach or by the pool), or seek covered outdoor spaces.
- A good rule of thumb: If your shadow is shorter than you, the sun's rays are at their strongest, and you should seek shade.

Wear Protective Clothing and Accessories:

- **Clothing:** Opt for lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing that covers your skin. Tightly woven fabrics offer better protection. Look for clothing with a UPF (Ultraviolet Protection Factor) rating, similar to SPF for sunscreens. The higher the UPF, the more UV radiation the fabric blocks.
- **Hats:** A wide-brimmed hat is far superior to a baseball cap, as it protects your face, ears, and neck.
- **Sunglasses:** Choose sunglasses that block 99% or 100% of both UVA and UVB rays (often labeled as UV400 or "100% UV protection"). This protects your eyes and the delicate skin around them, reducing the risk of cataracts and other eye problems. The darkness of the lens doesn't indicate its UV protection level.

Stay Hydrated:

- While not directly a sun protection method, staying well-hydrated is crucial in Florida's summer heat to prevent heat exhaustion and heatstroke, which can be exacerbated by sun exposure. Drink plenty of water throughout the day, even if you don't feel thirsty.

Check the UV Index:

- Florida's UV index in summer (June to August) regularly ranges from 9 to 11+, which is considered "very high" to "extreme." Be aware of the daily UV index in your area and plan outdoor activities accordingly.

HEAT RELATED ILLNESSES

EXTREME HEAT IN FLORIDA

Florida summers bring heat and humidity, increasing the risk of heat-related health issues. Whether at the beach or working outdoors, stay safe by following guidelines and checking weather updates.

HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES

These conditions can overwhelm the body's cooling system, leading to heat-related illnesses like heat exhaustion and heat stroke, especially for vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children, and those with pre-existing health conditions. To stay safe, monitor heat warnings, stay hydrated, wear lightweight, light-colored clothing, and avoid outdoor activities during peak heat. Ensure access to cool spaces and create an emergency plan for power outages to reduce the risks and protect your health during extreme heat events.

RECOGNIZE SIGNS OF HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES

Be aware of symptoms. Recognize signs of heat exhaustion such as excessive sweating, dizziness, nausea, headache, and rapid heartbeat. Heat exhaustion can progress to heat stroke if left untreated. Heat stroke is life-threatening. During a heat stroke, a person's body temperature can go over 104°F, causing confusion, unconsciousness, and organ failure. They need to seek immediate medical attention. Heat cramps are painful muscle cramps that an individual can develop from losing salt and fluids while sweating. Dehydration is a loss of water and electrolytes that leads to weakness and dizziness.

PREPARING YOUR HOME AND ENVIRONMENT

Keep indoor areas cool by using AC or fans, close blinds during the day, and open windows at night. Spend time in libraries or malls if you lack AC. Install heat-resistant features such as awnings, reflective window films, or insulation to keep your home cooler. Have a cooling plan, and know where to go during power outages, like cooling centers or friends' homes with AC.

HEAT STROKE

WHAT HAPPENS DURING HEAT STROKE

Heat stroke occurs when the body's temperature regulation fails, causing core temperature to rise rapidly, often above 104°F (40°C). This can happen within 10 to 15 minutes in extreme heat. Sweating may stop, especially in humid conditions, making it harder to cool down. If untreated, heat stroke can lead to organ damage, coma, or death.

SYMPTOMS TO WATCH FOR

BE ALERT TO THE FOLLOWING SIGNS, ESPECIALLY DURING HOT WEATHER ACTIVITIES:

- Confusion, disorientation, or slurred speech
- Hot, dry skin (though some may still sweat)
- Rapid heartbeat and shallow breathing
- Muscle cramps or weakness
- Fainting, dizziness, or unconsciousness
- Nausea, vomiting, or pounding headache
- Flushed, hot skin to the touch

WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY

IF YOU SUSPECT HEAT STROKE:

1. Call 911 immediately—it's a medical emergency.
2. Move the person to a cooler location (indoors or shade).
3. Cool them down: Remove excess clothing, apply cool, wet cloths, or spray with water. Use fans if available.
4. Do not give fluids if the person is unconscious or confused.
5. Stay with them until help arrives.

PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- Hydration: Drink water regularly; avoid alcohol and caffeine.
- Timing: Schedule outdoor activities in the early morning or evening.
- Shade & Breaks: Rest in shaded or air-conditioned areas often.
- Acclimatization: Gradually increase time spent in high heat.
- Sun Protection: Use SPF 30+ sunscreen, a wide-brimmed hat, and sunglasses.

WHO IS MOST AT RISK?

- Adults over 65 and children under 4
- People with chronic illnesses (e.g., heart disease, diabetes, obesity)
- Athletes and outdoor workers, especially those in heavy gear
- Individuals taking medications like diuretics, antihistamines, or blood pressure drugs
- Pets—they're also vulnerable in extreme heat

#heat PROTECT YOUR DOG'S PAWS THIS SUMMER

Air

77°F

86°F

90°F



Pavement

125°F

135°F

140°F

7-Second Rule: Place the back of your hand on the pavement. If you can't hold it there for 7+ seconds, it's too hot for your pup!

Asphalt temperatures can be up to 60°F hotter than air temperature!



Save & Share for Reference!

WE ARE PROTECTING OURSELVES - BUT WHAT ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF BEING IN THE SUN?

Being in the communications center, we may not be able to get the Vitamin D that we need. If we are lucky, we may get a quick break to step outside. But how can spending more time in the sun be helpful to us?

While sun exposure should be explored in moderation, there are many benefits to fitting in time in the sun. Our body produces vitamin D when exposed to the sun. Vitamin D absorption assists in the growth and development of our bones and teeth, and the necessary amount can vary among age levels.

According to Healthline's "Your Guide to Vitamin D Benefits", vitamin D can reduce the risk of multiple sclerosis (MS), decrease the chance of heart disease, reduce the likelihood of severe illnesses, and support overall immune health. It can also regulate mood. A review of 7,534 people determined that those expressing negative emotions received vitamin D supplements and noticed improvement. In Healthline's "Can Vitamin D Help You Lose Weight?", it is mentioned that vitamin D exposure can aid in weight loss. Daily vitamin D requirement depends on one's body size. The article states that a reduction in body size can, in contrast, decrease the requirement for vitamin D.

In addition, the sun emits sunlight in three different UV rays, including ultraviolet A rays, ultraviolet B rays, and ultraviolet C rays. Ultraviolet A rays can cause skin damage and lower the body's ability to fight illness. Ultraviolet B rays can cause sunburn, but the Earth's atmosphere shields us from most of these types of rays. Ultraviolet C rays are absorbed by the Earth's atmosphere, and there are minimal harmful effects. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's publication "Ultraviolet Radiation and Sun Exposure" stated that the best time to get optimal vitamin D exposure is before 10 a.m. and after 4 p.m.



HYDRATION IS KEY! BUT DID YOU KNOW SODIUM HELPS WITH HYDRATION

Maintaining proper hydration is crucial for health and safety, supporting essential bodily functions like cell activity and temperature control. Although water is commonly thought of as the primary source of hydration, sodium, largely obtained through salt intake, plays a significant role in the body's ability to manage and retain water.

60-70% of our body consists of water. Our body utilizes osmosis, the movement of water across cell membranes, to get properly hydrated. Water travels from areas where there are lower concentrations of solute to areas of greater solute concentration. Sodium is the primary extracellular fluid solute surrounding our cells. Having the correct amount of sodium outside the cells enables water to be transported from inside the cells to the bloodstream. This raises blood volume and assists in hydrating the entire body.

Our kidneys, which are like the body's filters, also really depend on sodium to control how much water we keep. They have a clever system that reacts strongly to sodium levels. If our body's sodium levels drop, or if we don't have enough blood volume, the kidneys kick off a series of hormonal signals. One important hormone, called aldosterone, tells the kidneys to grab onto more sodium. And here's the key thing: wherever sodium goes, water follows it. So when the kidneys hold on to sodium, they also hold on to water, so we don't lose too much of it when we go to the bathroom, and it makes us hydrated.

Sodium also directly influences how we experience thirst. Our brain contains special sensors that sense when the "stuff" (like sodium) in our blood is too concentrated. When the concentration of sodium in our blood rises, these sensors let our brain know that we need to drink more water, and we will become thirsty. This amazing system ensures that when our body is losing water and is getting more concentrated, we will feel the urge to drink so that we can rehydrate.

Conversely, if we are deficient in sodium, or if we lose an excessive amount (such as through heavy sweating without replenishment), this equilibrium is disrupted. When the sodium content of the blood is too low, a situation referred to as hyponatremia, water can enter our cells and swell them. This can be very hazardous, especially for brain cells. In such situations, even if we do have enough water, our body will struggle to hold it in the correct places because the "magnet" power of sodium is not sufficient.

In short, sodium is not just used to make food taste good; it has a vital function in our hydration. It controls where water goes in our body, makes our kidneys retain water, and even tells us to drink. Thus, taking a balanced amount of sodium, along with enough water, performs a crucial function in our bodies working at their optimum and being properly hydrated.



LETS JUMP IN!

BUT LETS ALSO BE SAFE

Summer in Florida is all about sunshine, fun, and staying cool! For many Floridians, that means spending time around a pool. Almost every home in Florida has access to a pool. There is approximately one pool for every 14 Floridians. We lead the nation in pools per capita. But while pools offer a refreshing escape, they also come with serious risks.

According to the CDC, Florida ranked 4th in the U.S. for unintentional drowning deaths among all ages in 2021, and tragically, we are ranked 1st for drowning deaths among children 0 to 9 years of age. Pools are especially dangerous for toddlers and babies. In 2024, there were 105 fatal drownings of children in Florida, and about 72% were 3 years and under.

The good news? There are many ways to prevent drowning deaths in Florida.

Always supervise children: Always watch children in or near water, never leave them unattended, not even for a moment.

- Teach swimming skills: Enroll children in swimming lessons as soon as possible.
- Stay clear of drains: Teach children to avoid pool and hot tub drains.
- Install safety devices: Install barriers, covers, and alarms.
- Get certified: Know how to perform CPR on children and adults.

Florida law also requires pool safety barriers. Per FSS 515.29, every residential swimming pool must have a barrier that is at least 4 feet high on the outside, it must not have any gaps or openings that could allow a young child to slip through, and it must be placed around the perimeter of the pool and be separate from any other fencing.

Did you know swimsuit color matters? Bright, neon colors offer the most visibility in the pool. Dark colors, light blue, and white should be avoided as these can blend in with the water or the pool environment. Swimwear with reflective stripes or patches can enhance visibility, especially in low-light conditions.

Lastly, remember that drowning isn't the only danger associated with pools. We must also be aware of the weather. Florida is the lightning capital of the United States! We experience an average of 1.2 million lightning flashes per year. If there is thunder and lightning in the area, go inside!

By following these simple tips, you can help ensure your summer is both fun and safe for everyone!

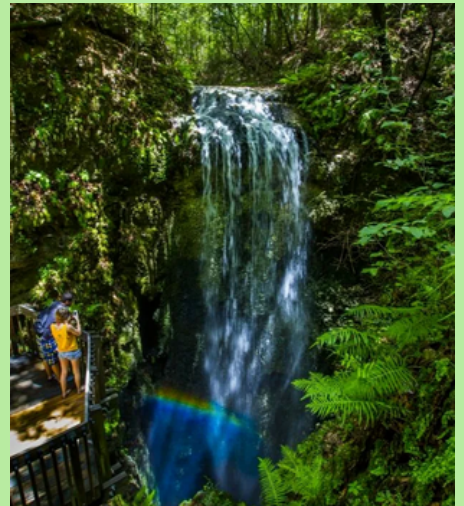


WHERE ARE YOU HEADED TO THIS SUMMER?

There are many different places around the state for everyone to enjoy during the summer. From parks, botanical gardens, beaches, and water parks, there is something for everyone

Falling Waters State Park - Chipley (Washington County)

Open each day of the year from 8 am until sundown, you can enjoy Florida's highest waterfall, surrounded by huge trees and sinkholes. It is \$5 per vehicle to get in, and it offers experiences such as camping, fishing, birdwatching, geocaching, hiking, swimming, and even has a wedding venue! With all of this, the park is also pet-friendly!

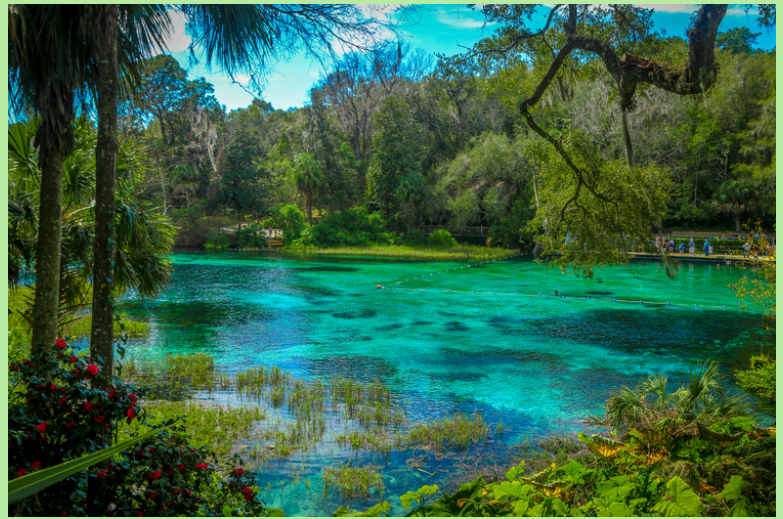


Falling Creek Falls - Lake City (Columbia County)

Known for having a short, accessible boardwalk and a "root beer" colored cascade, it is a place to escape into nature and see some of Florida's wildlife. While you are there, you can also enjoy a playground, a picnic, and it is free to get in!

Rainbow Springs State Park - Dunnellon (Marion County)

At \$2 per person to get into the park, you can enjoy the park by camping, fishing, hiking, paddling, waterfall viewing, snorkeling, and swimming. There is a concession stand and restaurant where you can take a break, as well as a garden that you can stroll through. Pets are also welcome, but make sure you keep them on a leash!



McKee Botanical Gardens - Vero Beach (Indian River County)

Jump into a mystical land of more than 10,000 plants on this 18-acre jungle landscape. The garden also offers a children's garden where they can explore and connect with nature. McKee offers classes and programs to better learn about the plants you can find throughout the garden.



Cedar Lakes Woods and Gardens - Williston (Levy County)

With 20 acres of botanical gardens, and different plants as the seasons change, each visit you make can be a different experience! The trails take about 90 minutes to complete, but have plenty of places to stop and rest, and take in all that is around you. While you are hiking through the trails, there is a scavenger hunt that you and your family can take on! There is also the opportunity to host events at the gardens.



Sugar Sand Park - Boca Raton (Palm Beach County)

Need to get the kids off the TV or tablets and outdoors to burn off some energy? Sugar Sand Park is the perfect place! With additional amenities like a splash pad, an exploratorium, and a carousel, there are limitless opportunities for kids to run around and use their imaginations.



Florida Caverns State Park - Marianna (Jackson County)

The only accessible caves in Florida, you can venture underground with a tour guide and see this unique attraction. Get there early as slots can fill up fast!



OTHER NOTE WORTH PLACES

Lockwood to Barr - Oviedo (Seminole County)

Green Springs Park - Enterprise (Volusia County)

Kanapaha Botanical Gardens - Gainesville (Alachua County)

Bok Tower Gardens - Lake Wales (Polk County)

Caspersen Beach - Venice (Sarasota County)

Bonnet Springs Park - Lakeland (Polk County)

Rapids Water Park - West Palm Beach (Palm Beach County)

Epperson Lagoon - Wesley Chapel (Pasco County)

Have you ever thought about resetting yourself through a holistic approach?

The Wellness Committee welcomed Jo-Anne Swensson to our June meeting, who taught us different ways that we can recharge and regulate ourselves at home and at work.

Use code FL-APCO for 25% off services!

Core Concepts of Holistic Wellness

- Nervous System Regulation: Can be achieved without medication through natural methods.
- Lifestyle Change: Holistic wellness is a supplement to medical treatment, not a replacement.

Key Practices and Strategies

At Work:

- Mental Preparation: Preshift rituals, journaling, and cultivating a positive mindset.
- Physical Practices:
 - Breathwork, meditation, EFT tapping, and chair yoga.
 - Stretching, posture checks, walking (indoors or outdoors), and hydration.
- Mindfulness Exercises: Sensing groundwork (engage all five senses mindfully).
- Healthy Habits:
 - Bring healthy snacks, meal prep.
 - Use essential oils mindfully.
- Reset Techniques: Use calming spaces, scent rollers (consider coworkers), and nature exposure.

At Home:

- Mental Wellness: Meditation, journaling, digital detox (avoid screens 90 mins before bed).
- Creative Expression: Use art or creative outlets to release stress.
- Movement: Maintain daily physical activity.
- Sleep: Focus on sleep quality, not just quantity.
- Nutrition: Be mindful of eating habits; timing affects sleep.

Community & Support

- Holistic wellness is not a solo journey — telecommunicators are not alone in their struggles.
- Encouragement to connect and support one another.

You can find additional information and resources at Resources at olivia-bell.com, including:

- Podcast
- Virtual workshops
- Free 30-minute Q&A sessions (3x/week)
- Info on herbs
- Free downloads

