

Newspaper article Friday May 24 2024

Smart Fun in the Sun

Summertime is here! Time to enjoy the great outdoors and all the activities that come with it. Hiking, biking, picnics, baseball, swimming, and all the other opportunities to explore the outdoors, take a minute to make sure you and your family are ready for fun in the sun.

- Make sure you're adequately hydrated. Try to have water available at every activity with a reusable water bottle. Drinking water before and during activity can help prevent dehydration. Urine should be light yellow or clear. Any darker and that can be a sign you're not drinking enough water! Signs of dehydration can be headache, weakness, blurry vision, and in extreme cases lack of perspiration and seizures. Don't like plain water? Try non-calorie flavor packets! It's still water!
- Protect your skin. Nothing fights off skin cancer in your 50's like skin protection in your 20's. Using a sunscreen that is SPF 30 or higher that protects from both UVA and UVB and reapplying at least every 2 hours can help fight off skin damage. Don't forget your ears, nose, thighs, and top of your head. Wearing wide brimmed hats and long sleeved, loose, breathable materials can also help shield your skin. Sun protection isn't just for the pool. Anytime you're out in the sun, especially from 10am to 3pm when the sun's rays are more intense, think skin protection.
- Practice food safety for meals eaten outdoors. Summer picnics and cookouts. Eating outdoors is just more fun sometimes. The food danger zone is between 40 and 140 degrees where nasty bacteria can grow and cause food-borne diseases. Plan ahead with packing food for transport (i.e. coolers, sack lunches) so there's adequate ice packs to keep cold food cold. Use a food thermometer to make sure cooked meats reach the appropriate internal temperature. After two hours at room temperature (or sooner if it's hotter outside!), food should be put in a fridge!

Enjoy your time outside and by keeping these simple tips you can do it safely.