



Summer Wellness

Inside This Issue:

- Turning Up the Heat: How Sun-Smart Are You?
- Tips for Staying Cool When Exercising in the Summer Heat
- Don't Get Burned! How to Protect Your Body From Sun Damage
- Sunburn and Heat Stress: Help Your Kids Play It Safe
- Keep Summer Healthy: Shape Up Your Eating Habits

Turning Up the Heat: How Sun-Smart Are You?

Test your knowledge of sun-related illnesses by taking this quiz.

What's your sun IQ? Take our quiz to find out.

True or false? (See answers on next page)

1. You do not need to use sunscreen if you will be staying in a shaded area.
2. You will get sunburned faster if you are in the water.
3. Disease-causing bacteria grow more rapidly on lukewarm food than cold – and can more readily result in food poisoning.
4. Sun exposure is considered the single greatest risk for developing skin cancer.
5. Skin cancer affects only light-skinned people.
6. The sun's strongest rays occur between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
7. If you are in good health and your doctor has not restricted how much fluid you should have, you should drink at least 16 to 32 ounces of water an hour to adequately replace fluids when working in a hot environment.
8. Certain over-the-counter and prescription medications can increase your sensitivity to the sun.

Answers

1. You do not need to use sunscreen if you will be staying in a shaded area.

FALSE: Ultraviolet rays will still reach you. Also, there is strong evidence that more UV rays are filtering through because of the depletion of the earth's ozone layer.

2. You will get sunburned faster if you are in the water.

TRUE: Water reflects sunlight, so you will get added exposure to your head, shoulders and any other areas that remain uncovered while you are swimming.

3. Disease-causing bacteria grow more rapidly on lukewarm food than cold – and can more readily result in food poisoning.

TRUE: The bacteria that cause food poisoning thrive in temperatures between 40 degrees and 140 degrees. Prepared foods are safe in that zone for about two hours. The same foods are considered safe only for one hour if the temperature rises above 90 degrees.

4. Sun exposure is considered the single greatest risk for developing skin cancer.

TRUE: About one million Americans are diagnosed with skin cancer each year and the increasing trend is blamed on exposure to solar rays.

5. Skin cancer affects only light-skinned people.

FALSE: Although skin cancer is more common among light-skinned persons, it is not unheard of in people who have dark complexions.

6. The sun's strongest rays occur between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

TRUE: Stay inside and keep young children out of the sun as much as possible during these times.

7. If you are in good health and your doctor has not restricted how much fluid you should have, you should drink at least 16 to 32 ounces of water an hour to adequately replace fluids when working in a hot environment.

TRUE: Your body sweats to cool itself. The only way to replace those lost fluids is to drink more water.

8. Certain over-the-counter and prescription medications can make you more sensitive to the sun.

TRUE: Even short exposure to the sun can result in burning if combined with certain medications. These include some antibiotics, such as tetracycline; certain diuretics; and some non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, such as ibuprofen, naproxen and ketoprofen.

Tips for Staying Cool When Exercising in the Summer Heat



Learn how to stay safe while exercising in the outdoor heat.

It's time to take your winter treadmill routine outdoors to the parks. The days are long and warm. The trails radiate heat. Summer is here and you're prepared to sweat! But before you lace up your running shoes, read these eight tips to keep your cool.

Safety tips

Heat-related illness is serious. But that doesn't mean you're doomed to a summer spent exercising in the air-conditioned gym. Learn these safety tips before you step out in the sun:

1. **Exercise in the early morning or late evening hours.** The temperature is the coolest at this time. Avoid exercising midday because it's the hottest part of the day.

2. **Drink up!** Do not wait until you are thirsty to start hydrating. Drink two to four glasses of water each hour. If you are exercising for an extended period of time, drink a sports beverage to replace the salt and minerals you lose through sweat. If you are on diuretics or a low-salt or fluid-restricted diet, talk to your doctor first about your specific fluid needs.



3. **Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing.** Consider dressing in clothes made with moisture-wicking fabric.
4. **Protect yourself from the sun.** Wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen with an SPF 15 or higher. Try to exercise in the shade. Play tennis on a court shaded by the trees or take a walk in a wooded park.
5. **Rest early and often.** Take breaks in shady areas.
6. **Gradually get used to the heat.** It takes seven to 10 days for your body to adapt to the change in temperature. Start by exercising for a short time, at a low intensity. Save long, hard workouts until after you're acclimated to the summer air.
7. **Mind the weather.** Do not exercise on the hottest days. Keep an eye on the heat index. The heat index is a calculation of the temperature and humidity. It measures "how hot it really feels" outside:
 - Heat index 80 to 90 degrees: fatigue during exercise is possible. Heat exhaustion is a possibility even at these temperatures.
 - Heat index of 90 to 105 degrees: heat cramps and heat exhaustion or heat stroke are possible.
 - Heat index of 105 or higher: heat exhaustion is likely and heat stroke is possible.

Be cautious when the heat index gets above 80 degrees. Consider working out indoors. Walk around a shopping mall or do a workout DVD in your air-conditioned home.

8. **Stop if you don't feel well.** If you have any of the warning signs of heat-related illness, stop your workout right away.

How the heat hurts you

We each have our own personal air-conditioning system inside our bodies. When we get hot, we sweat. Perspiration is our body's way of cooling off. As sweat evaporates, our body releases heat. But when you get extremely hot, sweat doesn't evaporate. The body then has to work extra hard to keep its temperature down. In time, our body will be unable to rid itself of the excess heat. This leads to a high body temperature and heat-related illness.

Recognize warning signs

The heat can take its toll on your body and make you sick. Heat-related illness can even be life-threatening. Learn how to spot signals of heat-related illness. They range from cramps to muscle spasms due to lost nutrients to more serious signs like dizziness or fainting.

Heat exhaustion is a warning sign that your body cannot keep itself cool. **Stop exercising right away.** Heat exhaustion is dangerous and may lead to heat stroke. Symptoms include:

- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Confusion or disorientation
- Headache
- Cramps
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dehydration

Heat stroke is life-threatening. **Stop exercising right away and call 9-1-1** for any of the following symptoms:

- Unusual behavior, hallucinations or confusion
- Fainting
- Seizures
- Fever of 104 degrees F or greater

Seek immediate medical attention if the person:

- Is vomiting and unable to keep fluids down
- Has dizziness or lightheadedness
- Looks very ill or is not getting better

Heat illness is more likely to occur in people who

- Are 65 or older
- Have chronic illnesses
- Are pregnant

Always check with your doctor before you take your exercise routine to the great outdoors.

Don't Get Burned! How to Protect Your Body From Sun Damage



Sunburn doesn't just cause pain and redness. It can also cause long-term effects. Learn the risks and find out how to protect yourself.

Between the beach, the pool, and the weekend cookouts, you may be having too much fun to worry about sunburn – until that telltale stinging and redness set in. Sunburn isn't just painful – it's also bad for your health.

The dangers of sunburn

The sun's rays contain two types of ultraviolet light. Ultraviolet A (UVA) causes tanning, aging skin, and wrinkles. Ultraviolet B (UVB) causes sunburn. Both can cause skin cancer. You can burn on sunny days, cloudy days, and cold days. The white sand on the beach and the white snow of winter both reflect the sun's rays. You can burn whether you're skiing on water or snow.

Signs of sunburn are redness and pain. You may also have swelling and blistering. A bad sunburn can lead to heatstroke and dehydration.

Long-term effects

Every time you tan or burn, DNA damage builds up in the deeper levels of your skin. Having 5 or more burns over a lifetime doubles your chances of getting skin cancer.

Other side effects of tanning and burning include premature wrinkles and age (pigment) spots. Over time, the sun can age your skin, making it tough and leathery.

Remember that your eyes can be affected, too. Too much sun can burn your corneas and lead to various eye diseases, including cataracts and age-related macular degeneration. These can cause vision loss.

The truth about sunscreen

Wearing sunscreen doesn't always keep you from burning. No sunscreen can completely protect you from UV rays.

A sunscreen labeled "waterproof" or "water resistant" will not protect you all day. When you swim or sweat, reapply your sunscreen.

The UV index

Your local news may broadcast daily UV index reports. The higher the index, the less time it will take to burn.

Here is your risk for overexposure to the damaging UV rays. The number indicates the daily UV index, followed by the degree of risk. The higher the index on a given day, the greater the need to protect yourself.

- 0-2: low
- 3-5: moderate
- 6-8: high
- 8-10: very high
- 11+: extreme

Preventing sunburn

Follow these prevention tips:

- Use only water-resistant or waterproof sunscreen. It should protect against both UVA and UVB rays and have an SPF of at least 15. Reapply every 2 hours and after swimming or sweating.
- Wear protective clothing when possible. Always include a hat and sunglasses.
- Limit sun exposure between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. This is when UV rays are strongest. If your shadow is shorter than you are, get out of the sun.
- Keep children in the shade and in protective clothing. Follow the same sunscreen rules for them that you would for yourself. Don't use sunscreen on children younger than 6 months old. They should be kept out of the sun. If a child under age 1 gets sunburn, call your pediatrician right away. Also seek emergency care if a child of any age has a sunburn with fever, blistering, severe pain, or lethargy.
- Be aware that water, snow, and sand all reflect UV rays and increase your chances for sunburn.

Treatment

Cool wet compresses, soothing lotions, and cool baths may help relieve minor sunburn pain. Drink plenty of fluids. For serious burns, call your doctor right away. Medication may prevent infection and help with the swelling and pain.

Sunburn and Heat Stress: Help Your Kids Play It Safe



Kids love to be outdoors during the summer, but the sun and heat can pose serious dangers. Learn how to protect your children from intense summer weather.

Summertime means more time to play outdoors. It also means parents should be extra careful keeping kids healthy in the sun and heat. Children will have a much happier summer if they avoid heat stress and too much sun.

Sunburn

To prevent sunburn, consider your child's age:

- **Keep babies under 6 months of age out of the sun.** Dress infants in lightweight long pants, long-sleeved shirts and brimmed hats that shade the face and neck. If you cannot keep your child covered and in the shade, sunscreen can be used, according to new recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- **Test a small area of skin** before applying sunscreen and watch for any reaction.
- **Call your doctor at once if your baby gets sunburned** and is younger than 1 year of age. Severe sunburn is an emergency.

All parents should:

- **Apply sunscreen** at least 30 minutes before your kids go outside, even on cloudy days. Use an SPF of at least 15. Make sure it is water resistant or waterproof. Reapply sunscreen every two hours and after swimming or sweating.
- **Cover them up.** Make sure your children wear hats with three-inch brims or bills facing forward. Dress them in clothes made of cotton with a tight weave. Have them wear sunglasses that block 99 percent to 100 percent of ultraviolet rays.
- **Keep kids in the shade whenever possible**, and limit their sun exposure between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- **Use extra sun protection near water and sand.** They reflect ultraviolet rays and may cause your child to burn more quickly.

Heat stress

When kids are busy playing on a hot summer day, they lose a lot of fluids. Children's bodies are more sensitive to heat stress than adults'. This can put them at risk for heat-related illnesses. To prevent dehydration and overheating, do the following:

- **Make sure children are well hydrated before they begin a prolonged activity.** Also make sure they drink during play. Have younger kids drink 5 ounces of cool tap water or flavored sports drink every 20 minutes. Children or teens weighing 130 pounds or more should drink 9 ounces, even if they don't feel thirsty.
- **Have them wear light-colored, lightweight clothing** with no more than one layer of absorbent material. This allows sweat to evaporate and cool the body. Have kids change out of sweaty garments and into dry clothes.
- **Shorten practices and games** when temperatures are higher than 75 degrees. Make sure children take frequent water breaks.
- **Shorten activities lasting 15 minutes or longer** whenever heat and humidity reach high levels.
- **Let your child get used to the heat.** When starting a strenuous exercise program or visiting a warmer climate, limit the intensity and length of activity. Gradually increase it over the next 10 to 14 days.

Keep Summer Healthy: Shape Up Your Eating Habits



Want to shape up your eating habits over the summer? With an abundance of fruits and vegetables, there is no time like the present.

You've decided to cut back on hot dogs, peel the fatty skin off your barbecued chicken and limit mayo-laden macaroni and potato salads. Will this be enough to shape up your summertime eating habits?

Cutting back on high-fat meats and mayo-drenched salads is a good place to start. But along with limiting certain foods, it's just as important to think about what to add to your meal plan.

To make healthy eating habits stick, it's better to think more about enjoying your food and less about what to avoid. Here are some ideas to whet your appetite that won't expand your waistline.

Make simple substitutions

Breaking an unhealthy food habit doesn't mean you have to make radical changes or follow complicated recipes.

- Exchange artery-clogging creamy sauces and dressings with marinades or dressings made with olive oil or canola oil (heart-healthy fats) and herbs.
- Instead of serving a classic potato salad with creamy mayo, try steaming new potatoes and drizzling them with olive oil, garlic powder and chopped chives.
- Look for chicken or turkey sausages to grill instead of pork. They taste delicious and often offer great savings on fat and calories.
- Use wholesome barley or quinoa for a grain-based salad instead of pasta or potatoes. Add lots of raw, cut-up veggies, such as red peppers, carrots, red onion and celery.
- Go for sorbets and fruits instead of heavy cakes if you crave dessert.
- Drink plenty of water in lieu of sports drinks and sodas.
- Downsize what you put on your plate. Fill two-thirds of it with fruits, vegetables and grains, and one third with poultry, fish or meat.

Take advantage of the season

Summer is prime time for the best fruits and vegetables.

- Try grilling vegetables, such as pearl onions, mushrooms, zucchini and bell peppers. Most vegetables can be grilled by cutting them into bite-size pieces and threading onto skewers. Grilled fruit kabobs are also a great summertime dessert!
- Buy fresh herbs (or grow them). They can bring out the flavor in food. If you have extra, chop them up, put them in an ice-cube tray and fill it with water. Once the herbs freeze, pop them out and put them in a plastic bag. Defrost by running them under hot water.
- At your next barbecue, skip the chips and serve crunchy carrot sticks, bell pepper strips and broccoli with a low-fat dip.
- Head to the beach with a veggie-filled picnic lunch. In addition to turkey or lean ham on whole-wheat bread, pack fruits and vegetables such as baby carrots, cherry tomatoes, grapes, plums and cherries.
- If you are going camping or hiking, unsweetened dried fruits, such as cranberries, raisins, apricots and figs, are easy to tote in your backpack.
- Avoid food dyes and excess sugar and make your own frozen fruit pops at home. Freeze 100 percent fruit juice in small paper cups (add diced-up fruit to the juice before freezing for extra fiber and nutrients). Insert wooden sticks when the juice is slushy enough to hold the stick upright. When the juice is frozen solid, peel the paper off and serve.
- Keep containers of fruits and vegetables washed and cut into bite-size pieces in the refrigerator. Have them as snacks instead of chips and cookies.

UnitedHealthcare
Insurance Company

