



SUMMER SAFETY FOR SENIORS

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Protect Your Skin with Our Sun-Savvy Tips

If you're an older adult, you may be at increased risk for sun-related health issues. Michael Stern, co-director of the Geriatric Emergency Medicine Fellowship at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center, offers seniors the following tips for enjoying summer — safely.

- **Don't get too much sun.** Sunburn makes the job of heat dissipation that much more difficult. Use sunblock (SPF 15 or greater) when outdoors for prolonged periods of time in the summer, even on hazy or cloudy days. If you have a loved one who has memory problems, make sure he or she is not in the sun for any extended period of time. That person may not recognize or be able to tell you that he or she is uncomfortable.

- **Stay cool.** When temperatures begin to reach extreme highs, stay in the coolest place available out of the sun or in an air-conditioned room.
- **Stay hydrated.** Drink plenty of fluids even if you don't feel thirsty. Minimize caffeinated beverages and alcohol, and grab a water bottle or a sports drink instead. A good test of hydration is to make sure that your urine is always clear in color.



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Brushing, Flossing and Your Heart

What's the Connection?

Poor oral health — including not regularly brushing or flossing — is unlikely to be the primary cause of heart disease. But poor oral health combined with other risk factors may contribute to heart disease.

Bacteria on your teeth and gums could travel through your bloodstream and attach to fatty plaques in your arteries, making the plaques become more swollen and inflamed. If one of the plaques bursts and causes a blood clot to form, you can have a heart attack or stroke. Steps to good oral hygiene include:

- Brushing your teeth at least twice daily
- Flossing your teeth daily
- Replacing your toothbrush at least every three months
- Getting regular dental checkups as recommended by your dentist

— Source: Mayo Clinic

Calcium

A Simple Guide

Dietary calcium is important for healthy bones, healthy teeth, muscle movement, nerve conduction and blood clotting. Not getting enough can put a person at risk for muscle cramps and weak or brittle bones that can break more easily.

Check with your doctor about the proper amount of calcium for you. Needs vary depending on sex, age, pregnancy, breastfeeding and other factors.

Calcium-rich foods include milk, yogurt, cheese, calcium-fortified foods (orange juice, soy milk, etc.), leafy green vegetables and nuts.

If you take a calcium supplement, take only the recommended amount, as higher calcium intake can lead to constipation, increased risk for kidney stones, and reduced absorption of iron and zinc from food.

— Source: University of Arizona

Skin-Cancer Update

Are You at Increased Risk?

Everyone has some possibility of developing skin cancer, but some people have more risk factors, such as the following:

- Light or fair complexion, especially blonde, red or light-brown hair and blue, green or gray eyes. It's important to note, however, that dark-skinned people can develop melanoma, especially on their hands, soles of their feet and under their nails.
- A tendency to burn easily and to tan little or not at all.
- Long periods of daily sun exposure, especially during childhood.
- A history of bad sunburns or scars from previous burns.
- A previous history of skin cancer.
- A family history of skin cancer, especially malignant melanoma.
- Many ordinary moles (more than 50).
- A history of atypical nevi (abnormal moles).
- Undergoing immunosuppressive therapy.
- Taking medications that interact with light to cause chemical reactions or increase the skin's sensitivity to sunlight. Check with your doctor or pharmacist to find out if any medications you are using increase your risk for sunburn.

— Source: Saint Louis University Cancer Center

Want more information on skin health? Visit www.HealthMart.com.

SUMMER FOOT CARE

Protect Your Tootsies — and Keep Them Looking Great

Foot problems affect the quality of life of millions of Americans. So the American Podiatric Medical Association has shared its top eight tips for summer foot care.

1. Don't ignore foot pain. If pain persists, see a podiatric physician.
2. Inspect your feet regularly. Look for thick or discolored nails and check for cracks or cuts in the skin.
3. Wash your feet regularly, especially between the toes, and dry them completely.
4. Trim toenails straight across, but not too short. Be careful not to cut nails in corners or on the sides. This can lead to ingrown toenails.
5. Make sure your shoes fit properly. Purchase new shoes later in the day when feet tend to be at their largest.
6. Select and wear the right shoe for the activity that you are doing (e.g., running shoes for running).
7. Avoid walking in bare feet. Your feet will be more prone to injury and infection.
8. At the beach or when wearing sandals, always use sunblock on your feet just as you do on the rest of your body.



DID YOU KNOW?

There's Fungus Among Us

Tinea fungus can cause athlete's foot and jock itch. The fungus can easily spread from one area of the body to another and requires immediate treatment. Tinea fungus also can affect the nails, causing the end of the nail to separate from the nail bed.

To avoid tinea fungus, keep the areas it targets dry and clean, use shower sandals in public bathing areas, and wear loose-fitting clothing.

If you do notice symptoms of athlete's foot, jock itch or nail fungus, talk with your doctor.

— Source: American Academy of Dermatology



HEALTHY SUMMER TREATS *Kids Want a Snack? Make It Yummy and Nutritious*

Children need snacks to keep their busy bodies and minds going. Not only do snacks provide energy for growing bodies, but they present an excellent opportunity for children to get the vital nutrients they need for growth and learning. Here are some easy summer-snack ideas:

- Low-fat yogurt and orange juice
- One-half peanut butter sandwich and low-fat or fat-free milk
- Graham crackers, an apple and low-fat or fat-free milk
- Carrot sticks and bell-pepper strips with low-fat ranch dressing
- Banana and low-fat chocolate milk
- Whole-wheat crackers, carrots and low-fat dip
- Cantaloupe and grapes, a small muffin, and a low-fat dip for the fruit

— Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture's "Team Nutrition" Initiative

Want more information on kids' nutrition? Visit www.HealthMart.com.



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KIDS AND SLEEP APNEA

What Parents Need to Know

Sleep apnea is marked by loud snoring and disturbed sleep caused by interrupted breathing patterns. In children, the leading cause is enlarged tonsils and adenoids, and the first line of treatment is surgical removal. If untreated, experts say, sleep apnea may contribute to serious health problems in later life, including hypertension, cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

Wearing a special mask to bed helps kids with sleep apnea breathe and sleep better, according to a study at Johns Hopkins Children's Center in Baltimore, Maryland. The breathing mask, which delivers a gentle, steady flow of air called continuous positive airway pres-

sure (CPAP) therapy, significantly improves breathing and blood-oxygen levels when worn regularly, researchers reported in the journal *Pediatrics*. Parents also reported that their children had improved daytime alertness after CPAP therapy.

Many of the children used the mask sporadically, which reduced the effectiveness of the treatment, according to the researchers. They stress the importance of parents monitoring mask usage so that kids can receive the maximum benefit from CPAP therapy.

Want more information on kids and sleep? Visit www.HealthMart.com.

HEALTH TIP



Older Adults Can Be More Sensitive to Alcohol's Effects

As people age, they may become more sensitive to the effects of alcohol. One reason is that older people metabolize, or break down, alcohol more slowly than younger people. So the alcohol stays in their bodies longer. Also, aging lowers the body's tolerance for alcohol. This means that older adults can experience the effects of alcohol, such as slurred speech and lack of coordination, more readily than when they were younger. An older person can develop problems with alcohol even though his or her drinking habits have not changed.

— Source: *National Institutes of Health*

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