

# Princeton Regional Health Department Community Health Newsletter

## Summer Health & Safety

### INSECT ALERT!

While often just a nuisance, mosquitoes can transmit West Nile virus and ticks can transmit Lyme disease.

- ✓ **STAY INDOORS** at peak mosquito biting times during the early morning and at dusk. Keep away from places where insects gather - near standing water, flower gardens and in the shade under trees on hot, sunny days.
- ✓ **AVOID TICK HABITATS**, such as wooded areas with dense shrubs or leaf litter, and “transition areas” - places where woods change to shrubs, or where low brush meets suburban yards.
- ✓ **COVER UP** with a long sleeve shirt and pants, and use a DEET-containing insect repellent according to directions to reduce the chances of getting insect bites. Frequent application and saturation of skin with repellent increase the risk of adverse reactions and do NOT increase its effectiveness.
- ✓ **DO A DAILY “TICK CHECK”**. Check your children’s skin (and your own) daily for ticks when you’ve spent time outside. If you find an attached tick, promptly remove it with a tweezer - ticks must be attached for at least 24 hours to transmit any disease.



### EAT HEALTHY!



- ✓ **KEEP COLD FOOD COLD AND HOT FOODS HOT.**  
Most organisms that cause food poisoning are odorless, colorless and tasteless, so foods that are spoiled may not taste or look bad. Wash hands frequently when handling food to keep germs away. Perishable foods spoil quickly in hot weather. Keep hot foods hot (above 165°) and cold foods cold (below 45°) when taking them out-doors for picnics. Throw away food left out at room temperature for more than two hours. Remember, **WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT** when you are unsure of a food’s safety.
- ✓ **VEGGIES TO THE RESCUE.**  
Need a refreshing change from hot dinners? Transform a tossed salad into a meal by adding strips of roasted turkey or lean ham from the deli, water-packed pre-flavored tuna, precooked shrimp, canned beans, chopped hard boiled egg, or shredded low fat cheese.
- ✓ **FREEZE IT!**  
Cooking, draining and chilling pasta and rice is what takes the longest for these recipes, so do it ahead of time! Then just thaw and add some fresh vegetables, low fat shredded cheese, cold shrimp or diced chicken ... add dressing and serve!

## EXERCISE ... CAREFULLY IN THE HEAT!

### ✓ RE-HYDRATE.

Your body can easily lose up to a quart of water an hour while exercising in hot weather. Drink water before, during and after exercising. Since your body can only absorb 8 ounces of cold water every 20 minutes, continue to drink fluids even after you no longer feel thirsty. Sports drinks - while popular among intense exercisers - are not necessary and are actually absorbed more slowly than plain water. If you prefer the taste of these drinks, dilute them with water before consumption for easier rehydration.



### ✓ AVOID THE "PEAK" HOURS.

Exercise in the morning or evening to avoid the most intense heat as well as the times when smoggy, ozone levels are highest. Very humid weather hampers perspiration's ability to cool your body, consider exercising indoors at the local YMCA, health club or shopping mall. Visit the NJ EPA's website for an air quality update at <http://www.njaginow.net/>.

### ✓ COOL OFF IN THE WATER.

Swimming is an excellent way to exercise when the weather gets hot. While the buoyancy of the water helps support your body weight it also adds natural resistance that helps tone and strengthen muscles (cool down by walking laps in the pool). You don't need to be a swimmer to benefit from water exercise: doing "doggie paddle" laps at the shallow end of the pool still counts as aerobic exercise. Make sure to put on a waterproof sunscreen - water reflection increases the sun's rays ability to BURN your skin.

## BE SUN SMART!

### ✓ DON'T FORGET YOUR SUNSCREEN.

Apply SPF 30 waterproof sunscreen at least 30 minutes before exercising outdoors and keep re-applying every two hours. Protect your eyes with sunglasses that block 100% of the sun's UV rays.

Ideally, babies up to 6 months of age should stay in the shade and wear hats and protective clothing when in the sun. The American Academy of Pediatrics says sunscreen products made especially for young children are okay to use on younger babies if there is no way to avoid the sun. For babies older than six months apply to all areas of the body - except around the eyes. If your baby rubs sunscreen into her eyes, wipe the eyes and hands clean with a damp cloth. If the sunscreen irritates her skin, try a different brand or try a sunscreen stick, or sunscreen or sunblock with titanium dioxide or zinc oxide. If a rash develops, talk to your child's doctor."



### ✓ WATCH OUT FOR HEAT STROKE.

Small children can overheat very quickly - so monitor them closely if they are running around in very hot weather. Older people and people with chronic illnesses can also overheat very quickly. When the body can't rid itself of excess heat, there is a sudden rise in body temperature. Symptoms appear rapidly: look for very hot and dry skin (no sweat), dizziness, nausea, confusion, headache and unconsciousness. Move the person to a cool area, or immerse in/pour cool water over the person to lower the body temperature as quickly as possible. Seek medical attention immediately: heat stroke can be fatal.

## BE SUMMER SAFE!

### ✓ HELMETS ARE FOR EVERY RIDE.

Wear a helmet! They should be worn by everyone for all activities on wheels (biking, roller skating, rollerblading, skate boarding, scooters, etc.). Parents, check the fit and condition of your children's helmets. Replacement of the straps, padding or the whole helmet may be necessary. Wear the helmet straight on the head - not tilted.



### ✓ WATER WISDOM.

Always swim with a buddy and don't leave children unsupervised near any water. Drowning is the third leading cause of unintentional childhood death. When boating, jet or water-skiing, always wear life jackets, don't use alcohol or drugs and let others know your plans.

### ✓ PREVENT RECREATIONAL WATER ILLNESSES

This summer, swimming pools will be filled with people having fun and staying cool. But did you know that germs can contaminate swimming water even if it is treated with chlorine? Healthy Swimming behaviors are needed to protect all swimmers from recreational water illnesses and will help stop germs from getting in the pool in the first place.

Learning about recreational water illnesses, which are spread by swimming in contaminated water, such as swimming pools, water parks, lakes and the ocean, can protect you and your family from illnesses. Here are six healthy swimming tips:

1. Don't swim when you have diarrhea...this is especially important for kids in diapers. You can spread the germs into the water and make other people sick.
2. Don't swallow the pool water. In fact, try your best to avoid even having water get in your mouth.
3. Wash your hands with soap and water after using the toilet or after changing diapers.
4. Parents/caretakers of young children: make sure to take them on frequent bathroom breaks. Waiting to hear "I have to go" may mean that it's too late.
5. Change diapers in a bathroom and not at poolside. Germs can spread to surfaces and objects in and around the pool and spread illness.
6. Everyone should shower/wash their whole body thoroughly (pay special attention to baby's/children's bottoms) with soap and water before swimming in a pool.



### ✓ BE SAFE ON THE ROAD.

Use safety belts and car seats correctly at all times. Even if you are a good driver you can be hit by a bad driver or other good drivers with mechanical failures. DON'T TEXT or TALK on the phone while driving. Don't turn around to look in the back seat - all it takes is 1 or 2 seconds to cause a crash.

