

Being Safe in the Summer Fun

By Phyllis Naegeli



¹ It's summertime! The days are longer and warmer, and, naturally, we are outside more often. It's a good time to consider summer safety tips.



² During the summer, the sun shines more directly on our part of the Earth. The sun gives off ultraviolet (UV) rays, which are the cause of sunburns. UV light is invisible to the human eye and is scattered through the atmosphere. Staying in the shade or being outside on a cloudy day doesn't eliminate our exposure to UV rays; they find us wherever we are.

³ There are many ways to protect ourselves from damage to our skin. Applying a sunscreen with an SPF (Sun Protection Factor) of 15 or higher on exposed skin is one of the best ways to guard ourselves. There are many types of sunscreens available, and the SPF ranges from 2 to 50 or even higher. Some come in fun colors that disappear after application, while others are available in spray bottles for ease of application. When applying sunscreen, be sure to spread it evenly over your skin, paying close attention to your nose, ears, and neck. This is when those fun colors can come in handy, as these areas are easily missed. Sunscreen should be reapplied after prolonged swimming or activity to maintain its effectiveness. And don't forget to use an SPF 15 or higher balm on your lips, as they can get sunburned too. Lip balms are also available in a variety of colors like pink or with sparkles, and flavors from cherry to chocolate.

⁴ Wearing light-colored clothing and hats will reflect the sun's rays away from our skin. There is also clothing available that provides an SPF of 30. Everything from hats to socks can be found to keep us safe in the summer sun. And don't forget your sunglasses. With the endless styles available, sunglasses are an important and fun part of summer safety. Our eyes need to be protected from UV rays too.

⁵ Playtime outside should be avoided during the midday hours. This is when the sun is highest in the summer sky and transmits the most direct rays. It is usually the warmest part of the day too. If you are going to be outside, it is best to schedule your playtime before 10:00 AM or after 4:00 PM when the sun is lower in the sky.

⁶ A trip to the beach should include a good sunscreen and a beach umbrella in addition to beach toys, radios, sunglasses, and bathing suits. The sun's rays are

reflected off the ocean water, and this intensifies the effects of the UV light. Plan a trip to the beach early in the day and plan to leave before lunch, or go later when the sun is lower in the sky. You may find the beaches less crowded at these times, which can add to your enjoyment.

⁷ Should you find yourself dealing with sunburn, there are ways to alleviate your discomfort. Aloe vera, sprays with numbing agents, and cool compresses will help to provide some relief and healing. If you experience chills, vomiting, or other symptoms of heat stroke, you should seek medical attention immediately.

⁸ As temperatures are much higher in the summer than other times of the year, we need to pay special attention to keeping our bodies hydrated. Drinking eight to ten 8 ounce glasses of water each day is essential during the summer. If you are playing sports or are very active, be sure to bring plenty of water to avoid dehydration. Sport drinks are another alternative to relieving your thirst. They contain minerals to help prevent dehydration. Be careful not to drink too many, though, because they contain high amounts of sugar.

⁹ Summer is a time for fun in the sun, but to keep it fun we should be smart and follow summer safety advice.

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Name _____



Date _____

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1. What does SPF mean? _____ _____	2. What is UV? _____ _____
3. The higher the SPF of a sunscreen, the ____ the protection from sunburn. _____ _____	4. Playtime outside is best avoided during the ____ hours of the day. _____ _____

5. UV rays are completely blocked when you sit in the shade. <input type="radio"/> A False <input type="radio"/> B True	6. Aloe vera is helpful for sunburn. <input type="radio"/> A False <input type="radio"/> B True
7. It is best to drink lots of soda in the summer. <input type="radio"/> A False <input type="radio"/> B True	8. Your lips don't get sunburned. <input type="radio"/> A False <input type="radio"/> B True
9. Sunscreen is available with many different SPF numbers. <input type="radio"/> A False <input type="radio"/> B True	