

SUMMER SAFETY TIPS

Keep your family safe this summer by following these tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

Source: www.aap.org



FUN IN THE SUN

Babies under 6 months:

- The two main recommendations from the AAP to prevent sunburn are to avoid sun exposure, and dress infants in lightweight long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and brimmed hats that shade the neck to prevent sunburn. However, when adequate clothing and shade are not available, parents can apply a minimal amount of sunscreen with at least 15 SPF (sun protection factor) to small areas, such as the infant's face and the back of the hands. If an infant gets sunburn, apply cold compresses to the affected area.

For Young Children:

- Apply sunscreen at least 30 minutes before going outside, and use sunscreen even on cloudy days. The SPF should be at least 15 and protect against UVA and UVB rays.

For Older Children:

- The first, and best, line of defense against the sun is covering up. Wear a hat with a three-inch brim or a bill facing forward, sunglasses (look for sunglasses that block 99-100% of ultraviolet rays), and cotton clothing with a tight weave.
- Stay in the shade whenever possible, and limit sun exposure during the peak intensity hours - between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Use a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or greater. Be sure to apply enough sunscreen - about one ounce per sitting for a young adult.
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours, or after swimming or sweating.
- Use extra caution near water, snow, and sand as they reflect UV rays and may result in sunburn more quickly.

POOL SAFETY

- Install a fence at least four-feet high around all four sides of the pool. The fence should not have openings or protrusions that a young child could use to get over, under, or through.
- Make sure pool gates open out from the pool, and self-close and self-latch at a height children can't reach.
- Never leave children alone in or near the pool, even for a moment.
- Keep rescue equipment (a shepherd's hook - a long pole with a hook

on the end - and life preserver) and a portable telephone near the pool. Choose a shepherd's hook and other rescue equipment made of fiberglass or other materials that do not conduct electricity.

- Avoid inflatable swimming aids such as "floaties." They are not a substitute for approved life vests and can give children a false sense of security.
- Children may not be developmentally ready for swim lessons until after their fourth birthday. Swim programs for children under 4 should not be seen as a way to decrease the risk of drowning.
- Whenever infants or toddlers are in or around water, an adult should be within arm's length, providing "touch supervision."

BICYCLE SAFETY

- Do not push your child to ride a 2-wheeled bike until he or she is ready, at about age 5 or 6. Consider the child's coordination and desire to learn to ride. Stick with coaster (foot) brakes until your child is older and more experienced for hand brakes.
- Take your child with you when you shop for the bike, so that he or she can try it out. The value of a properly fitting bike far outweighs the value of surprising your child with a new one. For more information on finding the proper fit, go to: <http://www.aap.org/family/bicycle.htm#choosing>
- Buy a bike that is the right size, not one your child has to "grow into." Oversized bikes are especially dangerous.
- Your child needs to wear a helmet on every bike ride, no matter how short or how close to home. Many accidents happen in driveways, on sidewalks, and on bike paths, not just on streets. Children learn best by observing you. Whenever you ride, put on your helmet.
- When purchasing a helmet, look for a label or sticker that says the helmet meets the CPSC safety standard.
- A helmet protects your child from serious injury, and should always be worn. And remember, wearing a helmet at all times helps children develop the helmet habit.
- A helmet should be worn so that it is level on the head, not tipped forwards or backwards. The strap should be securely fastened, and you should not be able to move the helmet in any direction. If needed, the helmet's sizing pads can help improve the fit.