



Health & Safety Alert #2-05-09

Keeping Safe in the Summer Part II



TOO MUCH SUN CAN CAUSE SUNBURN, DEHYDRATION, AND SUN/HEAT STROKE. ALL ARE PREVENTABLE WITH A LITTLE CARE!

WHAT IS A SUNBURN?

A sunburn is a painful skin condition, which occurs as a result of over exposure to the ultraviolet rays of the sun.

THE RISK OF SUNBURN IS HIGHER FOR:

- ❖ Persons with fair skin, blue eyes, and red or blonde hair;
- ❖ Persons taking some types of medications (check with the Doctor);
- ❖ Persons exposed to a lot of outdoors sunlight; and
- ❖ Persons whose skin is already compromised.



PREVENTION:

- ❖ Avoid the sun between 10 AM and 4 PM.
- ❖ Protect the skin using sun block with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or more: the lighter the skin, the higher the SPF should be. Apply sun block 15 – 30 minutes before going in the sun and every 1 to 1 ½ hours thereafter.
- ❖ Use a lip balm with sunscreen in it.
- ❖ Wear muted colors such as tan.
- ❖ Wear a hat (the looser the better) especially if hair is thin on top!
- ❖ Wear sunglasses that absorb at least 90% UV rays (check the label on sunglasses).
- ❖ Clouds and particulate matter in the air scatter sunlight. You can receive a “surprise sunburn” even on a cloudy day!
- ❖ Come in out of the sun when you first start to notice that your skin is getting pink.

WHAT IS DEHYDRATION?

Dehydration is the loss of body fluids and electrolytes due to profuse sweating and inadequate intake of water. Alcohol consumption aggravates dehydration.

SIGNS OF DEHYDRATION INCLUDE:

- ❖ Heat exhaustion
- ❖ Headaches
- ❖ Nausea and/or vomiting
- ❖ Fainting
- ❖ Blurred vision
- ❖ Confusion
- ❖ Urine output decreases & becomes concentrated and appears dark
- ❖ Sunken eyes
- ❖ Wrinkled or saggy skin – elasticity decreases
- ❖ Extreme dryness in the mouth
- ❖ Fever or temperature over 102 degrees
- ❖ Severe pain or blistering of skin



IF DEHYDRATION IS SUSPECTED, REHYDRATION IS THE KEY TO PREVENTING FURTHER COMPLICATIONS. REMEMBER TO DRINK LOTS OF FLUIDS!

WHAT IS SUN STROKE OR HEAT STROKE?

Sun/heat stroke is a serious life-threatening condition. It is the consequence of a series of events:

- ❖ It begins with dehydration. (Also usually a lack of sweating)
- ❖ As the core body temperature rises, heat exhaustion becomes more serious.
- ❖ **If not rectified quickly, heat stroke is the final shutdown of the body's organs from lack of these vital fluids and nutrients, and can lead to delirium, coma, and death!**



**IF SUN/HEAT STROKE IS SUSPECTED,
GET EMERGENCY MEDICAL ATTENTION
IMMEDIATELY!**



Risk factors for heat related illnesses

- ❖ Elderly, chronically ill or incapacitating illness, very young.
 - Chronic medical conditions include cardiac (heart) disease, hypertension (high blood pressure), obesity, diabetes, kidney and lung disease.
- ❖ Poor physical conditioning.
- ❖ High environmental temperature and humidity.
- ❖ Poor ventilation or cooling in buildings.
- ❖ Poor fluid intake.
- ❖ Alcohol use (increases fluid loss).
- ❖ Medications that inhibit perspiration or increase fluid loss, including:
 - Those used to treat movement disorders (antiparkinsonian drugs, including Cogentin).
 - Those used to treat allergies (antihistamines such as Benadryl [diphenhydramine]).
 - Diuretics (water pills) such as Lasix (furosimide), bumetanide, hydrochlorothiazide.
 - Those used to treat psychiatric conditions including, but not limited to:
 - Clozaril (clozapine)
 - Compazine (prochlorperazine)
 - Elavil, Limbitrol, Triavil (amitriptyline)
 - Haldol (haloperidol)
 - Loxitane (loxapine)
 - Phenergan (promethazine)
 - Seroquel (quetiapine)
 - Wellbutrin (bupropion)
 - Zyprexa (olanzapine)

“KEEP COOL THIS SUMMER”

Help avoid heat related illnesses

- ❖ Maintain hydration with cool water and sports drinks; provide extra fluids at meal times
- ❖ Drink at least 8 glasses of water a day, more in hot weather.
- ❖ Avoid caffeinated beverages and alcohol (both increase fluid loss).
- ❖ When outdoors, seek open, shaded areas, avoid crowds.
- ❖ Use fans and air conditioning indoors.
- ❖ Open windows at night when air is cooler outside to allow cross ventilation if no air conditioning.
- ❖ During heat of the day, keep blinds drawn and windows shut, and move to cooler rooms.
- ❖ If no air conditioning at home, go to a shopping mall or public library.
- ❖ Take frequent breaks when outside in hot sun or from physical activity.
- ❖ Wear light-colored loose-fitting clothing (dark colors absorb heat, loose clothing helps the body to cool); wear a hat and sunglasses.
- ❖ Eat regular light meals to ensure you have adequate salt and fluids.
- ❖ Take a cool shower or bath.
- ❖ Be aware of individuals with risk factors for heat related illness; observe them at regular intervals.

For questions or comments regarding the above Alert, please contact the MUI/Registry Unit at (614) 995-3810.

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