



Working TOWARD Wellness

LIVE BETTER. LIVE LONGER.

PROVIDED BY HEART HEALTH ACTION WINDSOR-ESSEX
AND THE WINDSOR-ESSEX COUNTY HEALTH UNIT

BE ACTIVE AND BE SAFE



Summer is a great time to enjoy outdoor activities. Whether it's swimming, golfing, playing soccer or softball, cycling, gardening or hiking, we tend to be a lot more active during the warmer months.

There are many benefits of regular physical activity, including reducing the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis and certain forms of cancer. Getting at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day will also increase your energy levels, reduce your stress and helps you sleep better.

While it's clear that physical activity is beneficial to your health and well being,

it's important to realize that many of our favourite outdoor activities come with a certain amount of risk, including the potential for injuries. The good news is that with a little planning, most of these injuries are preventable.

We also need to recognize that our outdoor environment can be a source of some risk to health if we don't take measures to protect ourselves and our families. For example, we need protection from the harmful UV rays of the sun to significantly reduce the risk of developing skin cancer. Mosquito bites transmit the West Nile virus and hot humid weather

can cause dehydration and heat-related illness. We should be aware that the kind and amount of outdoor physical activity, as well as the times of the day that we are active, may need to be modified when there are "smog alert" and/or high "UV index" days.

By understanding the risks and preparing ourselves, we can minimize the risk to our overall health. Read on to learn about how to manage them while enjoying the summer in the great outdoors.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE!

- | | T | F |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Over exposure to UV rays from the sun decreases the risk of developing skin cancer. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Many drowning victims know how to swim safely, swim with another person or are unsupervised. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. You should not go swimming by yourself for safety reasons. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Adults should drink about 1000 mL of cool, non-caffeinated fluids for every hour of continuous activity. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Children should drink about 100-200 mL of cool, non-caffeinated fluids for every hour of continuous activity. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. People who don't believe they are at risk for heat stroke if they work or exercise for long periods of time outdoors during high UV Index days may suffer from the "It Won't Happen To Me" syndrome. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Smog alert days are associated with low heat, low humidity and high UV exposure. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. To help prevent dehydration, you should drink only after you feel thirsty. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 9. Try to avoid areas with high traffic congestion to reduce exposure to smog. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 10. Adults should use insect repellents that contain no more than 30% DEET. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

see answers on back panel

Note the Benefits

...OF BEING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE:

- Decrease the risk of heart disease, stroke, diabetes, high blood pressure, colon cancer and osteoporosis
- Reach and keep a healthy weight
- Have stronger muscles and bones, and more flexible joints
- Have more energy
- Cope better with stress
- Get better sleep
- Feel better about yourself

...OF BEING SAFE WHILE BEING ACTIVE:

- Minimize the risk of serious health conditions such as skin cancer, eye damage, heat illness, West Nile Virus, etc.
- Reduces symptoms of asthma and chronic lung diseases



Why ARE THERE RISKS TO OUTDOOR SUMMER ACTIVITIES

In reality, everything we do carries with it a degree of risk. Being active outdoors during the summer is no exception.

Injuries can result from any number of summer activities. For example, not wearing a bicycle helmet is a major cause of head injuries for cyclists. Likewise, injuries that result from water-related activities like swimming and boating can lead to serious injuries and death. In fact, many swimmers who drown in

Canada do not know how to swim safely, swim alone or are not supervised.

Besides injuries, realities about our outdoor environment should also influence decisions about summertime activities. For example, on a “Smog Advisory” day, those who are active outdoors may experience breathing difficulties. Those who are young, older or have lung or heart conditions are especially at risk.

In addition, overexposure to UV rays from the sun dramatically increases the risk of developing skin cancer. Being physically active in hot humid conditions can also lead to dehydration which can lead to heat stroke, a life-threatening condition.

A more recent reality is the need to protect ourselves from mosquitos that might carry the West Nile Virus.

How CAN I BE ACTIVE AND BE

It’s all about knowing how to minimize your risks while enjoying your favourite outdoor summer activities.

TAKE STEPS

Injury Prevention

Most things you can do to prevent injuries to yourself and your family are about using common sense and following some basic safety practices. For example:

- Wear proper protective gear when cycling, in-line skating, or playing group sports like soccer.
- Know the rules of the road and trails when walking, jogging, cycling or in-line skating.
- Communicate! Let someone you trust know where you’re going, especially if you’re going alone. Whenever possible, plan to go with someone if you’re camping, swimming or going for a day hike.
- Know where you are going and what to expect when you get there. Always bring a map and compass (and know how to use them) when hiking.

- Bring a portable First Aid Kit along on outdoor activities like camping, hiking, etc. This may help prevent a more serious injury from occurring. Most important is that you know some basic first aid if an injury does occur.

Sun Safety

Being protected as much as possible from the sun’s UV rays helps prevent skin cancer, eye damage and dehydration. For the best protection, consider using a combination of the following:

- Wear protective clothing as often as possible such as: a wide brimmed (3”-4”) hat, long sleeves and pants (the darker in colour the better) and broad spectrum sunglasses that wrap around to the sides of your head.
- Limit your exposure to the sun between 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
- Look for shade, or create your own.
- Use “broad spectrum” sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher. Apply it 20-30 minutes before going outside and re-apply at least every 2 hours, after a swim or other activity where you sweat.

Proper Hydration

Your body needs lots of fluids to cool itself, to deliver energy to working muscles and to eliminate waste products. Higher temperature and humidity levels increase water loss from the body through sweat and evaporation. This prevents your body from being able to cool itself. Practice some basics to prevent dehydration and the more serious condition of heat stroke.

- Drink cool fluids before, during and after outdoor activities. Drink often and before you feel thirsty.
- For every hour of continuous activity, adults should drink about 1000 mL of cool, non-caffeinated fluids (water, juice, etc.) and children should drink about 400 - 600 mL.
- During physical activity, take regular rest breaks in the shade every 15 minutes. Use this time to drink cool fluids.
- Drink more if the weather is warmer or more humid than usual.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages prior to and during all physical activity.

What CAUSES US TO DECIDE NOT TO PREPARE FOR SAFETY?

The decisions that we make about our behaviour are complex and are influenced by many factors. Risk to ourselves or our family is only one factor that we may or may not consider. Many do not believe that they will be affected. This is commonly known as the “It Won’t Happen To Me” Syndrome!

For example, many people do not use sunscreen or insect repellent properly or drink enough fluids. They don’t believe that they will get skin cancer, West Nile Virus or will suffer from dehydration or heat stroke. However, if the risk(s) involved in a particular behaviour does not convince an individual to take safety seriously, they will be unprepared for many outdoor summertime activities.

SAFE AT THE SAME TIME?

- An easy way to tell if you are drinking enough is to check the color and quantity of your urine. If the volume is minimal and the color is dark yellow, then you need to drink more.
- Be active outdoors early or later in the day when the temperatures are generally cooler.
- On extremely hot and humid days, consider moving your physical activity indoors, if possible.
- Find out how you can do your part to reduce fossil fuel emissions.

West Nile Virus Protection

West Nile Virus can be passed to humans from a bite of an infected mosquito. To protect you and your family:

Air Quality

“Smog Advisory days” are now all too common in many parts of Canada. These days are associated with high heat, high humidity and high UV exposure. As a result, many of the precautions should be similar to those for sun safety and proper hydration. In addition, consider the following suggestions:

- Avoid outdoor activities during the afternoon or early evening when the quality of the air is likely at its lowest.
- Try to avoid areas with high traffic congestion to reduce exposure to smog.

Go for it!

RESOURCES

Parks and Recreation Departments
for trail maps

Local Radio/TV/Newspapers
for reports on daily UV index and smog alerts

WEBSITES

Canadian Red Cross Society
www.redcross.ca
Click on “water safety services”

National Safe Kids Campaign
www.safekids.org

Environment Canada UV Index & Sun Protection
www.msc-smc.ec.gc.ca/education/uvindex/index_e.html

Canadian Dermatology Association
www.dermatology.ca

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety
www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/phys_agents/
Click on “working in hot environments”

CAW Canada
www.caw.ca/whatwedo/health&safety/factsheet/heatstress.asp

Environment Canada
www.ec.gc.ca/envhome.html
Click on “clean air”

The Lung Association
www.lung.ca

www.wehealthunit.org and at
www.windsor-heart-health.com

CLIP & KEEP THIS INFO!

Tips to How to Be Active and Be Safe

- Learn proper swimming techniques and CPR/first aid training.
- Always supervise children when they are swimming in, or near, a pool, lake or ocean.
- Inspect neighbourhood play grounds for rusted or broken equipment and report hazards.
- Wear properly fitted helmets and other protective gear when cycling, in-line skating, skateboarding or riding on scooters.
- Apply sunscreen of at least SPF 15 to all exposed skin including ears, nose and neck. Apply a lip balm of at least SPF 15 as well.
- Seek shade by sitting under a tree or covered porches, or create your own by using an umbrella or wearing a wide brimmed (3"- 4") hat.
- Drink plenty of cool water during continuous physical activity.
- To reduce mosquito bites wear loose, light coloured clothing that is tightly woven such as polyester, heavy cotton or denim.
- Do not use combination sunscreen/DEET products because the sunscreen's effectiveness is reduced. Instead, first apply sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30, wait 20-30 minutes, then apply the insect repellent to exposed areas.

Pass it on!

Please feel free to copy any articles in this brochure as long as you acknowledge the source.

Make it happen at your workplace!

Here are some suggestions to promote and support safe and active outdoor summer activities:

- Post information on bulletin boards about the UV index, smog alerts and West Nile Virus protection.
- Make sure that all outdoor picnic tables that are used at meal breaks have attached overhead umbrellas to create shade.
- Post information on "learn how to swim" classes for employees and their families.
- Drink plenty of cool water if the workplace becomes hot and humid during the summer.
- Consider a policy that identifies conditions in which water is provided to employees while they work.
- Offer education sessions on outdoor summertime safety topics like proper hydration, protection from sun over exposure and West Nile Virus transmission, and how to modify outdoor working conditions when there is a Smog Advisory day.
- If possible, conduct outdoor work activities before 11:00 a.m. or after 4:00 p.m. on days when there is a Smog Advisory or when the UV index is moderate or high.
- Encourage employees to wear sunscreen and insect repellent when working outdoors.

"Be active, play safe and have fun in the glorious and warm summer sun!" Anonymous

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Answers (from front page): 1-F • 2-F • 3-T • 4-T • 5-F • 6-T • 7-F • 8-F • 9-T • 10-T

For more information about the Workplace Health Promotion Program, contact the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit at 258-2146, Ext. 3100



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