

Health and Wellness News

July 2019



Summer is upon us, and for many, this means more time in the sun! Whether you're going on a beach vacation or simply spending more time outdoors, it's important to know how to care for your skin during this season.

Did you know that skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the world? In fact, it accounts for almost half of all cases of cancer.

While most skin cancer is caused by too much exposure to ultraviolet (UV) waves from the sun, indoor tanning beds and sun lamps are also risk factors.

Many people only think about protection when they are spending a day out in the sun at the beach, lake, or pool. However, sun exposure adds up, so it's important to follow these recommendations:

- Avoid being in direct sunlight too long, especially during the hours of 10 am to 4 pm
- Be especially careful at the beach and in the mountains since sand, water, and snow reflect sunlight.
- Use a sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher when outdoors.
- Apply sunscreen thoroughly, covering all areas of exposed skin, and reapply after about 2 hours.
- Check the expiration date on your sunscreen since they are usually only effective for 2-3 years.

PREVENTION

Although the measures in the previous article are important for prevention of skin cancer, the sun should not be avoided completely. Spending time outdoors, especially doing physical activity and engaging with nature, are important for overall wellness. And, the sun is our primary source for Vitamin D, which is crucial for good health.

About 40% of people in the U.S. are deficient in vitamin D. This is concerning since it plays a crucial role in:

- Bone health
- Immunity
- Preventing depression
- Controlling inflammation
- Preventing muscle pain and weakness

Very few foods contain Vitamin D (cod liver oil, swordfish, salmon, canned tuna, egg yolks, and sardines) and you would need to eat them daily

to get enough. Some foods, like milk, are fortified with it. This means we need to spend time in the sun to ensure adequate levels. So how can we do this safely?

Midday is the best time to get Vitamin D efficiently, which means you don't need to spend very much time in the sun to get enough (and shouldn't). The pigment in your skin is called melanin and it protects you from excess sunlight. This means that darker skinned people need to spend more time in the sun to get sufficient Vitamin D.

The more skin you expose, the more vitamin D you will make. If you expose about 1/3 of your skin, you will only need about 10-30 minutes of exposure three times per week. Darker people will need more. It's also important to know that sunscreen will greatly reduce your ability to synthesize vitamin D. So, it's best to go out in the sun without, then apply sunscreen after 10-30 minutes to avoid burning and for cancer prevention.

SUN EXPOSURE AND VITAMIN D

DETECTION



The good news is that skin cancer can be detected early. Check your skin regularly for any new growths, spots, patches or sores that don't heal quickly.

The **A B C D E** rule is a helpful guideline:

A is for asymmetry - one half of a mole or birthmark doesn't match the other.

B is for border - the edges are irregular, jagged, notched, or blurred.

C is for color - the color is not the same all over.

D is for diameter - the spot is larger than about a 1/4-inch (although melanomas can sometimes be smaller than this).

E is for evolving - the mole is changing in size, shape or color.

IF YOU NOTICE ANY OF THESE CHANGES, SHOW THEM TO YOUR DOCTOR FOR A PROFESSIONAL EVALUATION.

EXERCISE OF THE MONTH

8 Tips for Summer Exercise



Many people become more active during the summer months since the warmer weather can make it more enjoyable to engage in outdoor activities. For others, the hot sun may interfere with regular workouts.

In either case, here are some tips for staying active in summer, while taking precautions to stay safe.

1. Take advantage of the warmer weather to change up your activities. For example, you could play frisbee at the beach or park, play volleyball, bike around a lake, or swim at the local pool.
2. If you normally run outdoors, try to find a shadier route or the best time of day to run.
3. Avoid outdoor exercise during the hottest part of the day (usually 10 am to 3 pm).
4. Keep tabs on your heart rate. Your body works harder in the heat so you may need to dial down the intensity of your workouts.
5. If you're concerned about maintaining your conditioning, do your cardio at a slower pace, but add in 30-second speed bursts every 3-5 minutes.
6. Drink plenty of water before, during, and after exercise to prevent dehydration.
7. Listen to your body and watch for signs of sun stroke or heat exhaustion, such as muscle cramps, fatigue, dizziness, breathlessness, disorientation, or a rapid pulse.
8. Refuel with fruits that are high in water like watermelon, grapes, cantaloupe, honey dew, pineapple, etc. They not only help to rehydrate you, but also provide healthy carbs that can boost your energy.



Recipe of the Month

WATERMELON BERRY FRUIT SALAD

This cool and refreshing fruit salad is great for a picnic or light dessert. Not only is it delicious, but it's also super healthy since the fruit is rich in antioxidants, vitamin C, and fiber. Plus, the yogurt provides protein and probiotics. Serves 6.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups cubed watermelon
- 1 cup sliced strawberries
- 1 cup halved grapes
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1/4 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 1 Tbsp chopped fresh mint
- 1 tsp honey
- 1 tsp orange zest



Instructions:

- Prepare all the fruit for the salad and combine in a large bowl.
- Whisk together remaining dressing ingredients and drizzle onto the fruit.
- Toss to combine and chill before serving.



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