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Summer Safety Tips

Sun Exposure

Babies under 6 months:

- Try to avoid sun exposure
- Dress in lightweight, long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and brimmed hats
- Sunscreen use is not recommended

Older than 6 months

- Apply sunscreen at least 30 minutes before going outside, even on cloudy days
- Use at least SPF 15
- Reapply sunscreen every two hours, or after swimming or sweating
- Wear a hat with a brim or a bill facing forward
- Wear sunglasses (preferably ones that block 99-100% UV rays)
- Wear cotton clothing with a tight weave over the majority of the body
- Stay in the shade whenever possible, especially avoiding sun exposure during the peak intensity hours between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm

Heat Stress in Exercising Children

- The intensity of activities that last 15 minutes or more should be reduced whenever high heat and humidity reach critical levels
- At the beginning of a strenuous exercise program or after traveling to a warmer climate, the intensity and duration of exercise should be limited initially and then gradually increased during a period of 10 to 14 days, to accomplish acclimatization to the heat.
- Before prolonged physical activity, the child should be well hydrated. During the activity, periodic drinking should be enforced, e.g., each 20 minutes, 5 oz. of cold tap water or a flavored sports drink for a child weighing 88 lbs., and 9 oz. for an adolescent weighing 132 lbs., even if the child does not feel thirsty.
- Clothing should be light-colored, lightweight, and limited to one layer of absorbent material to facilitate evaporation of sweat. Sweat-saturated garments should be replaced by dry garments.

Pool Safety

- NEVER leave children alone in or near the pool, even for a moment
- Install a fence at least 4 feet high around all sides of the pool
- Make sure pool gates self-close and self-latch at a height children can't reach
- Keep rescue equipment (a shepherd's hook – a long pole with a hook on the end, and a life preserver) and a mobile phone near the pool
- 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 are not developmentally ready for swimming 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"

Boat Safety

- Children should wear life jackets at all times
- Make sure the jacket is the right size. The jacket should not be loose and should always be worn as instructed with all straps belted.
- Blow-up water wings, toys, rafts, and air mattresses should never be used as life jackets or life preservers.
- Adults should wear life jackets for their own protection and to set a good example.

Bug Safety

- Avoid scented soaps, perfumes or hair sprays on children
- Avoid areas where insects nest or congregate, such as stagnant pools of water, uncovered foods and gardens where flowers are in bloom
- Avoid dressing your child in clothing with bright colors or flowery print
- To remove a visible stinger from skin, gently scrape it off horizontally with a credit card
- Insect repellents containing DEET are the most effective. The concentration of DEET in products may range from less than 10% to over 30%. The benefits of DEET reach a peak at a concentration of 30%, the maximum concentration currently recommended for infants and children. DEET should not be used on children under 2 months of age. Read the label carefully of any product you purchase for repelling insects.

Playground Safety

- Carefully maintain all equipment
- Swings should be made of soft materials such as rubber, plastic or canvas
- Make sure children cannot reach any moving parts that might pinch or trap any body part
- Make sure metal slides are cool to prevent children's legs from getting burned
- Parents should be cautious about using or purchasing a home trampoline
- Children should be supervised while on any playground equipment

Bicycle Safety

- Children are usually not ready to ride a 2-wheeled bike until age 5 or 6. Wait until the child is ready before pushing them to ride on 2 wheels. Consider their coordination and desire to learn to ride. Stick with coaster breaks (as opposed to hand breaks) until your child is older and more experienced.
- Take your child with you when you shop for the bike, so that he or she can try it out first to ensure a proper fit.
- Do not purchase a bike that your child can "grow into." Oversized bikes are 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. A helmet protects your child from serious injury and should always be worn.

Skateboard and Scooter Safety

- Children should never ride skateboards or scooters in or near traffic
- All skateboards and scooter-riders should wear a helmet and other protective gear
- Utilize a community skateboard park, which is more likely to be monitored for safety, rather than ramps and jumps constructed by children at home.

Travel Safety

- Always buckle up care seat and utilize seat belts
- When you child reaches the top weight or length requirements for his/her car seat, booster seats should be used until a lap/shoulder seat belt can be worn correctly.
- Keep supplies with you, such as snacks, water, a first aid kit, and any other medicines your child takes.
- Read the manufacturer's instructions and always keep them with the car seat. Read your vehicles owner's manual for more information on how to install the car seat. Utilize the harness system provided with your car seat. Check your car's instruction manual to confirm installation procedures.
- Children under 12 years of age should ALWAYS be in the back seat.
- Children in rear-facing care seats should never be placed in a front seat equipped with an air bag.
- Children traveling alone to visit relatives or attend summer camp should have a copy of their medical information with them at all times.

Lawn Mower Safety

- Try to use a mower with a control that stops the mower from moving forward if the handle is let go.
- Children younger that 16 years should not be allowed to use ride-on mowers. Children younger than 12 should not use push mowers.
- Make sure that sturdy shoes (not sandals) are worn while mowing.
- Prevent injuries from flying objects, such as stones or toys, by picking up objects from the lawn before mowing begins. Utilize hearing and eye protection.
- Do not pull the mower backward or mow in reverse unless absolutely necessary. Look for children behind you before moving in reverse.
- Always turn off the mower and wait for the blades to stop completely before removing the grass catcher, unclogging the discharged chute, or crossing gravel paths, roads, or other areas
- Do not allow children to ride as passengers on ride-on mowers.

Fireworks Safety

- Fireworks can result in severe burns, scars and disfigurement that can last a lifetime
- Fireworks that are often thought to be safe, i.e. sparklers, can reach temperatures above 1000 degrees F, and can burn users and bystanders
- Attending professional fireworks displays instead of using fireworks at home is highly recommended

Home Alone

- Spend time explaining your expectations for any time that your children are unsupervised
- Establish a regular schedule of "check-in calls" in which your child calls you to let you know how and what he/she is doing
- Establish a schedule or chores. Household tasks help teach children responsibility.
- For older kids, establish rules about friends coming over to visit, if permitted by both sets of parents
- Create a first aid kit and teach children how to use it. Establish a list of emergency contact numbers and keep it by the phone or in the memory of their cell phone.
- Store alcohol and prescription medication in a location that is completely inaccessible to children.