



# Summer Safety Tips

By: Betty Schroeder EMT-P/PI, EMS Educator

**Sun Safety: Those most at risk for heat illness are young children and the elderly.**

**Safety Tips: To protect yourself from dehydration, sunburn, and heatstroke.**

1. Be alert for symptoms of heat illness: fainting, dizziness, headache, nausea, rapid pulse, flushed skin, and body temperature of 104 degrees.
2. If suffering from a heat illness, rest in a cool area and sip cool, non-alcoholic drinks.
3. To avoid losing salt and water when sitting or sunbathing, replenish with fluids often and avoid beverages with alcohol or caffeine. Keep the skin moist and cool.
4. Wear loose-fitting clothing, a hat, and a waterproof sunscreen.
5. Wetter is Better. Don't change into a dry shirt at breaks or time-outs. Completely soaked shirts do better at cooling the body.
6. If you take prescription drugs, check with your doctor before sunbathing.
7. Exercise in the morning or evening when the weather is coolest. Also be sure to wear light-colored, lightweight porous clothing.
8. Kids should drink every 15 minutes when they're active.
9. Our perception of thirst decreases as we age so older people need to drink more – even if they're not thirsty.
10. By the time you're thirsty, you're already dehydrated so drink before you get to that point.

**Symptoms You Should Know for Dehydration:**

- Dry lips and tongue
- Apathy and lack of energy.
- Muscle cramping.
- Bright-colored or dark urine.
- If left untreated dehydration can escalate to heat exhaustion or heat stroke, which can be deadly.

**Bites:**

1. Human or animal bites often become infected or transmit illnesses such as rabies. Medical evaluation is necessary for thorough cleansing and treatment, and a tetanus shot may be required if you have not had one within five years.
2. Insect bites or stings that cause severe swelling at the site of the bite, a generalized rash or any swelling of the face or difficulty breathing, require immediate medical evaluation. Remove stingers from bee or wasp stings by scraping (the edge of a credit card works well). Don't use tweezers or fingernails.
3. Minor swelling and itching can be treated with cool compresses, over the counter oral antihistamines or hydrocortisone creams. (Use only as directed).

**Safety Tips:**

1. Refill any prescription medications and carry them with you in the original marked container.
2. Carry important medical information with you. (Names and phone numbers of your doctor and pharmacist, insurance cards, etc).
3. Pack a first aid kit (for minor problems like sunburn, insect bites, cuts and scrapes, etc.).
4. Be cautious when exploring, chopping wood, or building campfires.

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5. Dress appropriately for the weather.
6. Before hiking, check for potential hazards or terrain, sanitation, climate, or infectious diseases.
7. When traveling abroad, consult with your doctor regarding immunization requirements and ask about the safety of the water supply.
8. Avoid fresh fruits and vegetables except those with a peel that can be removed.

**Lightning: Lightning strikes are fatal less than a third of the time.**

### **Safety Tips:**

1. Don't go near the water.
2. Don't lie down on wet ground.
3. Don't go near tall or metal objects, such as flagpoles, fences, and trees.
4. If you're inside, stay away from electrical appliances and don't use the telephone, as they are good conductors of electricity.
5. Don't watch storms from an open window or door, and avoid the fireplace, as it is often a lightning target.

**Fireworks: Over half of fireworks injuries occur during the 4th of July week.**

### **Safety Tips:**

1. Never light an explosive indoors or near any objects.
2. Never place an explosive in a container, as it could explode and spray harmful fragments into the eyes and face.
3. Never use fireworks near dry grass or leaves.
4. Always check for spilled gasoline before lighting a match.
5. Do not wear loose clothing while using fireworks.
6. Read the labels and follow the directions carefully.
7. Make sure the firework contains less than 50 mg of gunpowder. If it has more than this amount, it is illegal and may be dangerous.
8. Always wear safety goggles while shooting fireworks and stand in a safe place.
9. Make sure nothing is left burning before leaving the scene.

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## **For More Information Contact:**

**The U. S. Fire Administration**  
301-447-1000  
[www.usfa.dhs.gov](http://www.usfa.dhs.gov)



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