



Seven Tips for Healthy Summer Fun

Your health is important.

Because the Youens and Duchicela Clinic believes this, the following is brought to you in an effort to provide wellness information that you can use to help manage and maintain your health.

This week, the focus is on enjoying the summer months—but in a safe, healthy way. These tips, provided by Dr. Olga Duchicela, will help you to do just that.

BEWARE OF HEAT RISKS.

During hot summer months, anyone can be affected by heat-related illnesses, but the risks are higher for some. Children and elderly should be especially careful, as should those who are pregnant, taking medications, using alcohol, or consuming large amounts of caffeine. If temperature rises quickly and the individual is not able to control his/her internal temperature, heat stroke may occur. To combat, drink plenty extra water, and avoid high sodium, high caloric drinks as well as alcoholic beverages. Cotton is also a smart summer clothing choice, as it helps to keep the body cool.

ENJOY THE EXTRA FREE TIME, BUT HAVE A PLAN.

Clear those schedules! Summer is an opportunity to spend more time with family. But with extra free time comes extra temptations—especially for teenagers. According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, more teens try marijuana during June, July, and August than at any other time of the year. Experimentation with alcohol is also likely during summer months. To avoid their engagement in these unhealthy and possibly harmful activities, parents should make themselves available to their children. Also, search for adult-supervised activities in the community, team-up with other adults, or use a call-in schedule to make sure the lines of communication stay open between parents and teenagers.



IMPROVE YOUR DIET AND EXERCISE ROUTINE.

Summer is the perfect time to focus on improving one's diet. Remember: to lose weight, calories in must be less than calories out. For most adults, cutting back 50 to 100 calories per day may prevent the gradual weight gain that comes with getting older. Regular physical activity—especially involving children—is also a wise choice to help burn calories. Adults should aim for 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise (such as walking) or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity exercise (such as running) per week. Swimming, jogging, biking, and yardwork can all be done as a family outside; if it's too hot outside, consider indoor activities such as stretching, dancing, or jumping rope.

RELAX YOUR MIND.

Adults should take 30 minutes each day to relax their minds by focusing on another activity that helps them be good to themselves. Yoga, gardening, or listening to music are advantageous choices. During these times, resist the temptation to use alcohol for relaxation purposes. It is a central nervous system depressant and will not allow the maximum benefit of the relaxation experience.

PRACTICE DENTAL HYGIENE.

With the hustle and bustle of the summer, it's often easy to forgo a dental routine. Instead of letting that happen, strengthen your own routine with daily flossing, which helps reduce oral bacteria. If oral bacteria is low, your body has more resources to fight bacteria elsewhere, improving your overall body health—and helping to avoid a nasty summer cold.

BE GOOD TO YOUR EYES.

Eyes are one of the most vulnerable areas on a body during hot, sunny days because of the sun's UV rays. These UV rays come not only directly from the sun but also in the form of reflections from water, sand, and pavement. Frequent exposure can damage the eye's lens and retina as well as cause cataracts to develop on the eye. To combat, make sunglasses a habit when outside.



APPLY SUNSCREEN.

To get the most benefit from sunscreen, apply BEFORE sun exposure while inside, not outside. Choose a sunscreen with an SPF of no less than 30 that fights both UVA and UVB rays. Then, apply—generously—and reapply every two hours. Midday sun rays are the strongest, so, when possible, avoid expose during this time of the day.

The information provided here is not to be used as a substitute for medical attention. Remember that, should you have specific medical questions or desire more information, contact your doctor.