

# Sun Safety

- Please be aware of illness that can be caused by very hot weather. **Prevention is key!**
- Teach your children to always drink plenty of fluids before and during activity in hot, sunny weather.
- Make sure they wear light-colored, loose clothing and use sunscreen when outdoors.
- Teach your children to come indoors, rest, and hydrate immediately whenever they feel overheated.

## Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is a more severe heat illness that can occur when someone in extreme heat becomes dehydrated. Symptoms can include:

- intense thirst
- weakness or sleepiness
- fainting
- muscle cramps
- nausea or sickness
- irritability
- headache
- excessive sweating and cool, clammy skin
- temperature between 38°C or 40°C



If your child is showing these symptoms you need to cool them down, try bringing your child to a cooler place indoors, an air-conditioned car, or shaded area, remove excess clothing, and encourage your child to drink cool fluids sports drinks containing salt and sugar can help, place a cool, wet cloth or cool water on your child's skin. If left untreated, heat exhaustion can develop into heatstroke, which can be fatal.

## Heatstroke

The most severe form of heat illness is heatstroke.

**Heatstroke is a life-threatening medical emergency.**

In heatstroke, the body cannot regulate its own temperature soaring to 41.1°C or even higher, leading to brain damage or even death if it isn't quickly treated.

Call 999 if your child has been outside in extreme temperatures or another hot environment and shows one or more of these symptoms of heatstroke:

- severe headache and confusion
- rapid breathing and heartbeat
- loss of consciousness
- seizure
- is not sweating even though they are too hot
- flushed, hot, dry skin
- temperature of 40°C or higher

While waiting for help:

- Get your child indoors or into the shade.
- Undress your child and sponge them with cool water.
- Do **not** give fluids unless your child is awake and alert.



## Who Needs Sun Protection?

Every child needs sun protection. The lighter someone's natural skin color, the less melanin it has to absorb UV rays and protect itself. The darker a person's natural skin color, the more melanin it has. But both dark- and light-skinned children need protection from UV rays because any tanning or burning causes skin damage.

Here are the key ways to protect kids' skin:

- **Use Sunscreen**
- Avoid summer sun exposure between 10 am and 4 pm.
- Children should wear protective clothing, sunglasses, and a hat.
- Apply sunscreen that provides UVB and UVA protection with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30.
- Apply sunscreen 15 to 30 minutes **before sun exposure** and 30 minutes after exposure begins, then reapply after your children have been swimming or sweating.
- Although the best way to protect babies 6 months of age or younger is to keep them shaded, you can use small amounts of sunscreen (with an SPF of at least 30) on small exposed areas, like the face.



## What if My Child Gets a Sunburn?

When children get sunburned, they usually have pain and a sensation of heat — symptoms that tend to get worse several hours after sun exposure. Some also get chills. Because the sun has dried their skin, it can become itchy and tight. Sunburned skin begins to peel about a week after the sunburn. Encourage your child not to scratch or peel off loose skin because skin underneath the sunburn is at risk for infection.

To treat a sunburn:

- Have your child take a cool (not cold) bath, or gently apply cool, wet compresses to the skin to help ease pain and heat.
- Apply pure aloe vera gel to any sunburned areas.
- Apply moisturizing cream to rehydrate the skin and treat itching. For the more seriously sunburned areas in kids over 2 years old, apply a thin layer of 1% hydrocortisone cream to help with pain. (Do **not** use petroleum-based products, because they prevent excess heat and sweat from escaping. Also, avoid first-aid products that contain benzocaine, which may cause skin irritation or allergy.)

If the sunburn is severe and blisters develop, call your doctor. Tell your child not to scratch, pop, or squeeze the blisters, which can get infected and cause scarring. Keep your child out of the sun until the sunburn is healed. Any further sun exposure will only make the burn worse and increase pain.

## The Water Safety Code

In the hot weather it can be very tempting to take a dip in a river, lake or stream however these often have hidden dangers. Dangers of Rivers, lakes, ponds and streams include; very cold water, hidden currents, fast flowing water with debris and obstacles, very deep and most importantly no lifeguard supervision. You may be an able swimmer in warm pools however this doesn't mean you will be able to swim in cold water.

## Swimming Pools

Home swimming pools like any other pool need adult supervision. Children can drown in just 2 inches of water. To ensure children are safe always supervise. Designate a 'water-watcher' during swim time. Ensure there is a perimeter around the pool so young children cannot fall in. Always stay within an arm's reach of young children and avoid distractions to ensure they are safe.

## Stay Hydrated

### How do I know if my child is hydrated?

Frequent bathroom breaks or wet nappies are the easiest way to tell if your child is hydrated. You can also look out for these common symptoms of dehydration:

- Headaches
- Poor concentration
- Thirst
- Cracked lips
- Dry mouth
- Constipation
- Lethargy
- Dark urine



### How to stay hydrated

Make it a priority to get your kids slurping down as much H<sub>2</sub>O as you can. Aiming for six to eight cups a day is a good goal for most children.

Slip



Slop



Slap



Seek



Slide



Protect yourself in five ways from skin cancer

## Teach your children these basic things to stay safe!

### Five steps to float:

1. Fight your instinct to thrash around
2. Lean back, extend your arms and legs
3. If you need to, gently move them around to help you float
4. Float until you can control your breathing
5. Only then, call for help or swim to safety

When around water THINK SAFE!

**S**tay

**A**way

**F**rom the

**E**dge.