

BETter Living ...

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Safety: It Takes All of Us

Summer has arrived and with summer comes the heat! The National Safety Council has named July as National Safety Month. Heat is not the only factor that affects our safety during the summer. We will review some tips regarding: first aid, fun in the sun, yard safety, and listening to your body.

First Aid – untreated heat stress can quickly lead to heat stroke, a life-threatening condition.

If you suspect someone has heat stress, you should follow these steps:

- call 911
- move the victim to a cool place and remove outer clothing
- immediately cool the victim with any means at hand, preferably by immersing them up to the neck in cold water or apply ice bags or cold packs beside the neck, armpits and groin
- do not give the victim anything containing caffeine or alcohol
- be ready to provide CPR if breathing stops

Fun in the Sun – everyone enjoys a little bit of summer fun, but it's always important to monitor the weather conditions in extreme heat.

Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- no matter how long you plan on being out, wear sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15
- take water breaks every 15 minutes when working or playing outdoors
- wear a hat and UV-absorbent sunglasses
- eat small, light meals before outdoor activity

Yard Safety – yard upkeep is essential during the warmer months, but is also a common cause of injury. Lawnmowers alone send tens of thousands of people to the emergency room each year.

Do not start mowing until you:

- know how to operate the equipment and follow the safety instructions
- fill up the gas tank when the engine is cold
- clear the area from rocks and sticks preventing flying debris
- wear eye and ear protection, and appropriate shoes and clothing when operating the lawnmower
- keep children and pets away from the mowing area

Listen to your body – even after following all the necessary precautions, you should still be on the lookout for overexertion. Overexertion accounts for about 3.3 million emergency room visits per year in the United States. Stop and take a break if you experience the following:

- dizziness
- sore or painful muscles
- pulse higher than recommended exercise pulse for your size and condition
- feeling very hot and sweating profusely
- low abdominal pain
- nausea

Please remember to be safe when you are outdoors enjoying the summer with your family!

For more information about National Safety Month, visit: www.nsc.org.