



Summer Safety

It's summertime!

The return of warmer weather brings thoughts of freedom, relaxation, exploration, and being closer to nature.

Whether you're hanging out in the backyard, hitting the pool, or exploring the great outdoors, here are some ways to help keep you and your family healthy this season.



ST. CHARLES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF
**Community Health
& The Environment**



The Heat is On

Keep your cool when the weather warms

As the temperature soars, so do problems with heat-related illnesses. Infants and senior citizens are the most susceptible. According to the Centers for Disease Control, more Americans die from heat-related illnesses each year than from all other natural disasters combined.

● Beat the heat

The best defense against heat-related illness is prevention. When a heat wave is happening, follow these tips.

- Avoid strenuous activity, especially during the hottest part of the day
- Drink plenty of water, and avoid beverages that contain alcohol or caffeine
- Stay in the air conditioning as much as possible
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing
- Eat smaller meals, and avoid foods that are high in protein

● Heat cramps

Heat cramps are muscle pains and spasms most often caused by heavy exertion in hot weather. Heat cramps are an early signal that your body is having trouble coping with the heat.

To treat heat cramps, move to a cooler place and rest in a comfortable position. Stretch the affected muscle and drink a half-glass of cool water every 15 minutes until symptoms subside.

● Heat exhaustion

Symptoms of heat exhaustion include heavy sweating, headache, nausea or vomiting, dizziness or fainting, and weakness. The victim may also have cool, moist, pale, or flushed skin.

If you suspect heat exhaustion, move to a cooler place. Loosen or remove clothing and apply cool, wet cloths to the skin. If the victim is conscious, give them a half-glass of cool water every 15 minutes until symptoms subside. Watch the victim carefully for changes in their condition.

● Heat stroke

Heat stroke is a medical emergency. Symptoms include hot, red skin; rapid, weak pulse; rapid, shallow breathing; and loss of consciousness.

Call 911 immediately. While waiting for medical personnel, move the victim to a cooler place. Wrap their body with cool, wet sheets or immerse them in a cool bath. Watch for signs of breathing problems. Keep the person lying down, and continue to cool their body until help arrives.



For more tips on beating the heat, visit
www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat



Choose Your Cover

Summer means fun in the sun, but too much can lead to burns

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in the United States. It is usually caused by exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light. The majority of exposure to these harmful rays occurs in childhood. The best way to prevent skin cancer is to protect yourself from the sun.

- **Hide and seek (shade)**

UV rays are strongest and most harmful from 10:00am to 3:00pm, so it's best to plan indoor activities at that time. If this is not possible, seek shade under a tree, an umbrella, or a pop-up tent to reduce UV exposure. Use these options to prevent sunburn, not to seek relief once it's happened.

- **It's a cover-up**

Clothing that covers your skin helps protect against UV rays. Although a long-sleeved shirt and long pants with a tight weave are best, they aren't always practical. A T-shirt, long shorts, or a beach cover-up are good choices, too — but you should still double up on protection by applying sunscreen and staying in the shade when possible.

- **Hat trick**

Hats that shade the face, scalp, ears, and neck are easy to use and give great protection. Baseball caps are popular among kids, but they don't protect their ears and neck. If your child chooses a cap, be sure to protect exposed areas with sunscreen.

- **Shades are cool**

Sunglasses can protect your eyes from UV rays, which can lead to cataracts later in life. Look for sunglasses that wrap around and block as close to 100 percent of both UVA and UVB rays as possible.

- **Slop on sunscreen**

Use sunscreen with at least SPF 15 and UVA/UVB protection every time you go outside. Follow the instructions on the label, and reapply often.

- **Don't plan to tan**

Whether they come from the sun or a tanning bed, UV rays are UV rays: they all damage your skin. Avoid tanning beds.



To learn more about sun and UV protection, visit
www.cdc.gov/chooseyourcover



Grillin' and Chillin'

Keep food safe during summer cookouts and picnics

Whether it's a picnic for the park, lunch at the lake, or s'mores under the stars, summer is a good time to dine in the great outdoors. Make the most of the fun by making sure your food stays safe. Follow these Fight BAC! tips from the Partnership for Food Safety Education.

- **Wash, wash, wash your hands!**

Always wash your hands with hot, soapy water before and after handling food.

- **No gunk on the greens**

Always rinse fresh produce to remove soil and other contaminants before eating. Never use the same cutting board or knife that was used to cut raw meat products.

- **Marinating mandate**

When marinating for long periods of time, keep foods refrigerated. Don't use sauce that was used to marinate raw meat on cooked food. Boil used marinade before applying to cooked food.

- **Hot, hot, hot!**

When grilling foods, preheat charcoal for 20 to 30 minutes, or until the coals are lightly coated with ash. This will ensure the correct cooking temperature and burn off any starter fluid.

- **Gauge your temperature**

Use a meat thermometer to ensure that food reaches a safe internal temperature.

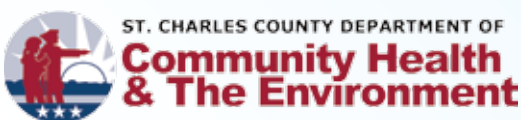
Hamburgers	155°F	Steak/Roast	145°F
Poultry	165°F	Pork	145°F
Fish	145°F	Leftovers	165°F

- **Pitch the plate**

When taking food off the grill, do not put cooked items on the same plate that held raw meat.

- **Give bacteria the cold shoulder**

A full cooler will maintain its temperature longer than one that is partially filled. Be sure to pack enough extra ice or freezer packs to ensure a constant cold temperature.



To learn more about food safety, visit
www.fightbac.org



What's in the Water?

Avoid recreational water illnesses when swimming

Taking a dip on a warm summer day can be refreshing, but do you know what else is in the water with you? Waterborne pathogens such as norovirus, E. coli, and Giardia can cause diarrhea and vomiting, putting a damper on summer fun. Here are some simple tips for safe swimming.

- **Don't drink the water**

Some bacteria can stay active for days, even in properly chlorinated pools, so don't swallow pool water.

- **Keep it clean**

Shower with soap and water before entering a pool, and wash your hands thoroughly after using the toilet or changing diapers.

- **Take a break**

Be sure children take frequent bathroom breaks to avoid accidents. For toddlers, check their diapers often.

- **No quick-change artists**

Change diapers in a restroom and not at poolside. Dispose of soiled diapers properly.

- **Recovery time**

Don't go swimming with diarrhea. Refrain from swimming for at least two weeks after a bout of infectious diarrhea (diarrhea caused by E. coli, Shigella, Cryptosporidium, or Giardia).

- **Sign, sign, everywhere a sign**

Sometimes bacteria run wild at lakes and rivers. Pay attention to posted warning signs, and avoid contact with the water when advised.

- **On the lookout**

The St. Charles County Environmental Public Health Program responds to consumer concerns regarding aquatic center sanitation. Contact us at (636) 949-1800.



For more tips on safe swimming, go to
www.healthyswimming.org



A Pet-prescription for Health

Stay healthy while enjoying your furry friends

Animals provide companionship and other benefits for humans. Sometimes though, disease-causing organisms hitch a ride on their fur, feathers, or skin. About 75 percent of the new diseases affecting humans can be traced to animals or animal products.

- **Lather up**

Wash your hands with soap and warm water after handling animals. Antibacterial wipes or hand sanitizer gels are acceptable substitutes if handwashing facilities are unavailable.

- **Who's at risk?**

A person's age and health status may increase their chances of getting sick. Those most susceptible to contracting disease include infants and children, senior citizens, pregnant women, and people with suppressed immune systems.

- **Animals all around**

Some animals are more likely than others to pass diseases on to humans. They include reptiles (turtles, lizards, and snakes), baby chickens and ducks, puppies and kittens less than six months old, and pets with diarrhea.

- **People food is for people, pet food is for pets**

To avoid the spread of disease, keep food and drinks out of animal areas, and don't share food with animals. Avoid eating raw (unpasteurized) dairy products.

- **Keep an eye on your kids**

Children under five years of age need supervision around animals. Never allow them to put their hands or other objects in their mouth while interacting with animals. Be sure they wash their hands thoroughly after playing with animals.

- **Town and country**

If you visit a petting zoo, farm, county fair, or other event where you have direct contact with livestock or other animals, be sure to wash up before getting in the car to go back home.



For more tips on staying healthy around animals, go to
www.cdc.gov/healthypets



Bug Off!

Ticks, mosquitoes, and other insects can cause disease

Warmer weather isn't just attractive to people. Mosquitoes, ticks, fleas, and other insects thrive in the summer. These bugs can transmit West Nile virus, Lyme disease, and other illnesses. Follow these simple steps to protect yourself.

- **Beat 'em with DEET**

Use an insect repellent containing at least 20% DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide) whenever you go outdoors. A new repellent called picaridin is also effective against ticks and mosquitoes. Repellents with lemon eucalyptus oil provide protection against mosquitoes, but not ticks.

- **Hit 'em where they live**

Eliminate pest breeding grounds. For mosquitoes, that means draining sources of standing water. To prevent ticks, remove leaf litter and clear tall grasses and brush around homes and at the edges of lawns.

- **The long and short of it**

If you're planning to spend time in the woods or tall grass, wear long sleeves and long pants in light, solid colors so you can spot ticks easily. Tuck your pants into your socks or boots to keep ticks and other pests out. In addition, keep the time spent in tick-infested areas short.

- **Come in, check out**

After spending time outside, check your body, your clothes, and your pets for ticks and other insects. To remove a tick, use tweezers to grab its head as close to your skin as possible, then pull straight out.

- **In sickness, get help**

If you get sick at any time up to three weeks after getting an insect bite, consult your health care provider. Your illness could be any one of a number of insect-borne diseases.



To learn more, visit
www.cdc.gov/features/movingoutdoors or
www.dhss.mo.gov/TicksCarryDisease