Staying safe in the summer heat

As the days get warmer, it becomes increasingly important to stay hydrated and keep your body cool. Whether you are spending a leisurely day at the beach or going for an outdoor run, you should make sure that you are taking the proper steps to prevent dehydration and overheating.

Tips to stay hydrated:
- **Keep water on hand.** Take a water bottle with you before leaving the house and drink from it throughout the day. Feeling thirsty is a signal that your body is already on the way to dehydration, so drink up!
- **Snack on hydrating fruits and veggies.** Peaches, oranges, cucumbers, carrots, watermelon, and grapes all taste great and help to re-hydrate!
- **Drink water before, during, and after exercising.** The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) recommends that for every 15-20 minutes you exercise, drink 3 to 8 fluid ounces of water (if you’re not exceeding 60 minutes of exercise).

Tips to stay cool:
- **Dress appropriately.** Lightweight, light-colored clothes help reflect sunlight away from your body and help keep heat levels down.
- **Choose the time you spend outdoors wisely.** The temperature tends to be cooler in the early morning and early evening.
- **Listen to your body.** If you start to feel lightheaded or faint, take a break from whatever you are doing, have some water, and rest in a cool area.

With just a little planning and preparation, you and your loved ones can stay cool and refreshed on hot summer days. Enjoy the warm weather and stay safe!

Protect your skin from sun damage

Too much exposure to the sun’s harmful UV rays is the number one cause of skin cancer, which is diagnosed in 3.5 million people each year in the U.S.—more than all other cancers combined. Here’s how to defend your skin against damage:
- **Avoid direct sun exposure** as much as possible during 10 am and 2 pm when the UV radiation is highest.
- **Stay in the shade** whenever you can.
- **Apply sunscreen** with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or greater at least 30 minutes before sun exposure. Reapply at least every 2 hours after the first application, or more often if you are sweating or swimming.
- **Don wide-brimmed hats** that protect your head, neck, face and ears.
- **Wear light-colored clothing** made of tightly woven fabric.
- **Put on wrap-around sunglasses** with “total UV” protection.
- **If you already have sunburn,** wear long-sleeved shirts and pants to prevent further skin damage.
- **Avoid indoor tanning beds.**

If you notice any suspicious spots on your skin or changes in a mole, it is important to talk to your doctor. Visit a dermatologist once a year for a skin check, or more often if recommended based on your medical history.
Opioid misuse: What you need to know

Have you or a loved one been prescribed opioid painkillers like hydrocodone (e.g., Vicodin) or oxycodone (e.g., OxyContin or Percocet) and worry about misusing them? It's a common concern.

An estimated 2.1 million people in the U.S. are suffering from substance abuse related to these powerful pain relievers. Spotting the beginning signs of abuse early can lead to successful interventions.

Look for these warning signs:

**Drowsiness.** Nodding off during a conversation, meeting, class or dinner.

**Inability to focus.** Poor concentration can result in impaired performance and missed days at work or school.

**Loss of relationships.** People misusing painkillers may be increasingly isolated or choose to be with others who have similar addictions.

**Physical changes.** Signs include small pupils, itching or flushed skin, an unkempt appearance, confusion, slurred speech, or frequent flu-like symptoms — nausea, fever and headache can be signs of withdrawal when someone can't get more of the drug.

Remember, opioids are addictive and easy to overuse and misuse. They can create a constant need to take the drug, which can result in overdose or even death. The constant craving created by opioids has led many people to turn to Fentanyl—often obtained as an illegal, synthetically-made opioid more potent than heroin that is responsible for a growing number of overdose deaths.

Concerned about opioid use, dependency or withdrawal? Talk to your doctor, or for immediate help, call the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357).

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