



Health Bulletin

Health tips and news for the community

Summer 2011

Stay Cool in the Heat

In Philadelphia, summer is a great time to get outdoors. But the heat, humid air and long days can be unsafe, especially for older adults and people with health problems. Too much heat can cause **heat sickness**. Know what signs to look for and how to prevent it.

Signs of **heat sickness** may include:

- Extreme sweating
- Nausea (upset stomach)
- Feeling very weak
- Feeling tired
- Thirsty
- Lightheaded or dizzy

If you have any of these signs, get to a cool spot and drink something. Using a fan and putting wet towels on your skin may also help. If you start feeling worse, get medical help.

If you are on medication for any reason, you may be at high risk for heat-related problems. Be sure to ask your doctor, and be careful to avoid situations where you might overheat.

Inside this Health Bulletin:

- *Stay Cool in the Heat*
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For help when it is hot or to find a place to cool off, call the Philadelphia Corporation for Aging Heatline at 215-765-9040.

During hot weather, stay safe from the heat by following these tips:

Drink lots of fluids.

- Drink water throughout the day
- Avoid caffeinated drinks like soda, tea or alcohol (they can dehydrate you)

Stay cool outside.

- Avoid being outside during the hottest times of the day (10 a.m. - 2 p.m.)
- Try to rest in the shade and wear sunscreen, light clothing, hats and sunglasses to keep cool

Stay cool inside.

- Use a fan with the windows open or an air conditioner
- Visit places like the library, shopping centers, movie theaters or senior centers that have air conditioning

Watch out for others.

- Check on your neighbors and people you know who have medical problems
- Never leave seniors, children or pets alone in a car

Be Food Safe

Summer means picnics and barbeques. **Food poisoning** happens more often in the summer because warm weather and eating outside makes it harder to make and serve food safely.

Raw meat, chicken, fish and unwashed fruits and veggies can have germs (bacteria or toxins) that can make people sick. These germs can also live on food that is left out for too long or on unwashed surfaces like countertops and cutting boards. Kids and older adults are more likely to get food poisoning because their bodies have a harder time fighting germs.

Be Food Safe– continued

Sometimes it is hard to tell if someone has food poisoning because the signs may not start until days after eating the bad food.

The signs of food poisoning are: upset stomach, vomiting, stomach pain and diarrhea.

Before you sit down to eat, make sure you know the steps to keep your food safe.

Keep your food safe by following these four easy steps:

Clean. Wash hands, cooking tools and surfaces before and after they touch raw meat, chicken or fish.

Separate. Keep raw meat, chicken and fish away from other foods. Don't return cooked food to the tray that carried the raw food unless it's been washed.

Cook. Cook foods to the right temperature and use a thermometer to check. Remember, you can't tell if food is done by how it looks.

Chill. Food left out of the refrigerator (or above 40 degrees) for more than 2 hours may not be safe to eat. Play it safe: put leftover food back on ice once you finish eating so it does not spoil.



Summer is Mosquito and Bug Season - Avoid Insect Bites to Avoid Infection

Mosquito and tick bites can make you sick. These bugs can spread diseases like West Nile Virus and Lyme Disease.

Quick Tips:

- Stay inside at dawn and dusk, which is when mosquitoes are most active
- Keep mosquitos outside by having well-fitting screens on both windows and doors
- Empty standing water from around your house where mosquitoes can lay their eggs
- If you are out when bugs are active:
 - ◊ Wear bug spray that has one of the following ingredients:
 - ⇒ **DEET**
 - ⇒ **Picaridin**
 - ⇒ **Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus** or **PMD**
 - ◊ Wear long sleeves and pants to cover your skin



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