Stay Safe and Healthy This Summer

The temperatures are rising and the days are getting longer. It′s summertime once again. Here are some tips to help make your summer the best, and healthiest, one yet.

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Grill and Chill

Whether you prefer burgers off the grill or a picnic in the park, one thing you don't want on the menu this summer is foodborne illness. Take these steps to help keep germs at bay.

- Wash your hands before and after handling food.
- When taking foods off the grill, do not put cooked food items back on the same plate that previously held raw food.
- When grilling foods, preheat the coals on your grill for 20 to 30 minutes, or until the coals are lightly coated with ash.
- Use a meat thermometer to ensure that food reaches a safe internal temperature.
- Never let raw meat, cooked food or cut fresh fruits or vegetables sit at room temperature more than two hours before putting them in the cooler or refrigerator (one hour when the temperature is above 90°F).
- Make sure to pack plenty of extra ice or freezer packs in your cooler to ensure a constant cold temperature.

Beat the Heat

Heat-related illnesses claim the lives of hundreds of people each year, so it is important to take these precautions when working or playing outside during the hot summer months.

- Drink plenty of water or other non-alcoholic beverages;
- Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing that is light in color;
- Reduce strenuous activities or do them during the cooler parts of the day.

Fun in the Sun

Your summer plans may include hitting the beach, or just spending more time outdoors. Make sure you plan to avoid sunburn, which can increase your risk of skin cancer.

- Seek shade, especially during midday hours (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.), when UV rays are strongest and do the most damage.
- Cover up with clothing to protect exposed skin. A long-sleeved shirt and long pants with a tight weave are best.
- Wear a hat with a wide brim to shade the face, head, ears, and neck.
- Grab shades that wrap around and block as close to 100% of both UVA and UVB rays as possible.
- Rub on sunscreen with sun protective factor (SPF) 15 or higher, and both UVA and UVB protection.

Swim Safe

Swimming is a fun way to stay cool and be active. Before diving in, make sure you know these tips for staying healthy and safe while swimming.

- Avoid swallowing pool water or even getting it in your mouth.
- Shower before swimming and wash your hands after using the toilet or changing diapers.
- Take children on bathroom breaks or check diapers often.
- Keep an eye on children at all times. Kids can drown in seconds and in silence.
- Never swim alone or in unsupervised locations. Teach children to always swim with a buddy.
- Don't use air-filled swimming aids (such as "water wings") with children in place of life jackets or life preservers.

For More Information
1-800-CDC-INFO
http://www.cdc.gov/