

Summer should be a time of relaxation, fun, and adventures, but that doesn't mean these summer safety tips should take a vacation! By making safety a priority for you and your family, you can reduce injuries and illness and enjoy all that summer has to offer.



Heat & Sun Safety

Spending time in the sun can be great for your mood and health. Too much heat or UV exposure is dangerous. Know how to protect yourself!

Dress smart by wearing lightweight, loose-fitting clothing in light colors. Don't forget to wear sunglasses (UVA & UVB protection) and a wide-brimmed hat to shield your face and eyes.

Apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen with at least a SPF30 and reapply every two hours. Apply more often if swimming or sweating.

Hydrate by drinking plenty of water before, during, and after outdoor activities. Don't wait until you feel thirsty; by then you may already be dehydrated

Never swim alone - use the buddy system. Always swim in supervised areas. Even experienced swimmers may run in to trouble.

Avoid consuming alcohol as drinking impairs judgement and reaction time. Do not consume alcohol before or during water activities.

Know your swimming limits and abilities and do not overexert yourself. Fatigue can set in quickly.

Follow posted signs and flags that indicate water conditions, rip currents, and hazards.

Be cautious when diving by keeping your arms extended over your head to protect your neck and head. If you cannot see what is beneath the surface, do not dive!

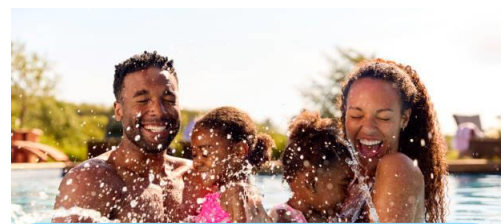
Limit time in the sun, especially between 11:00 am and 3:00 pm when the sun's rays are strongest. Plan outdoor activities when temperatures are lower and the sun is less intense.

Check the Air Quality Health Index regularly. It is important to adjust summer activities accordingly to minimize exposure to pollutants, particularly for those who have pre-existing respiratory or heart conditions.

Keep the [Environment Canada](#) link handy for your one-stop weekly/hourly weather forecast, UV Index forecast, Air Quality Health Index, and weather alert reports.

Rest frequently by taking regular breaks in shaded or air-conditioned areas, especially during physical labor or exercise.

Know the symptoms that signal heat exhaustion or heatstroke - headaches, dizziness, muscle cramps, nausea, or confusion. If symptoms arise, move to a cool area and hydrate immediately. Seek medical attention, if symptoms do not improve quickly.



Water and Swimming Safety

Swimming is a summer must! Unfortunately, it is also one of the leading causes of injuries that could have been prevented. Whether you're at the pool, lake, or beach practice these water safety tips!



Insects and Wildlife

Spending time outdoors means sharing space with insects and wildlife. Be aware of your surroundings at all times.



Use insect repellent that contains DEET or other EPA-approved ingredients to prevent bites from mosquitoes and ticks.

Cover up with long sleeves and pants in heavily wooded or grassy areas.

Check for ticks after being in wooded and grassy areas. Check your body and clothing thoroughly. To learn how to remove ticks properly, click [here](#).

Always maintain a safe distance from wildlife and never approach or feed wild animals.

Only grill outdoors! Never grill in an enclosed area or under overhangs. Propane and charcoal grills should only be used outdoors. Keep grills away from buildings and flammable materials.

Never leave your grill unattended. Keep children and pets at least three feet away from the grill area.

Dispose of grilling coals safely. Let charcoal cool completely before discarding in a metal container.

When disposing of an expired or damaged propane cylinder, never throw in household garbage or recycling containers. *They are considered hazardous waste.* For more information on cylinder recycling safety and disposal locations within Canada, please click [here](#).

New or old, full or empty propane cylinders should always be stored outdoors away from heat and sources of ignition. Keep them in a secure and well-ventilated area off the ground.

Always keep a fire extinguisher handy for flare-ups or grease fires.



Grilling and Food Safety

Barbeques are a favorite summer tradition and involves both fire and food safety precautions. Follow these safety guidelines to enjoy a fun and safe grilling experience!



Foodborne illnesses are more common during the summer months when temperatures are warmer. To minimize your risk, practice the safe handling or preparing of food.

Always use a separate cutting board, plates, and utensils to keep raw meat separate from other foods to avoid cross-contamination.

Use a cooler (with ice or cold packs) to keep perishables cold (below **4°C**). **Do not let food sit out** for more than one to two hours (less time if the temperature is over **32°C**).