

Summer 2017 Newsletter



Summer Safety...

Summer has arrived, and with it a unique set of medical concerns. Here are some things you need to know to get the most out of your summer.

1. Sunscreen is an important way to protect against skin cancer. When enjoying the sun, be sure to apply SPF 15+ sunscreen to all exposed skin, and reapply every 2 hours. Keep as much of your skin covered as feasible. Interestingly, while having a "base tan" may help you avoid a significant burn, it only offers SPF 3-equivalent protection from UV radiation, which contributes to skin cancer. Everyone should use sunscreen when enjoying the sunshine.
2. Heat illness can be a serious threat to health, and comes in two varieties: heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Heat exhaustion has symptoms of dizziness, sweating, clammy skin, nausea, muscle cramps, and fast pulse. It is treated by moving to a cool location, applying cool compresses, removing excess layers, and drinking cold water or an electrolyte replacement beverage. Heat stroke has

symptoms of headache, lack of sweating despite skin that is hot and dry, pounding pulse, and possibly loss of consciousness. It should be treated in the same way as heat exhaustion, but it is also a medical emergency, and 911 should be called.

3. Poison Ivy and related plants contain an oil that can cause an irritating skin condition known as Rhus Dermatitis, or less specifically as Allergic Contact Dermatitis. Keep in mind that this condition can be caused by multiple plants, not just poison ivy. So the old adage, "leaves of three, let it be" is a definite over-simplification. Rhus Dermatitis results in an itchy, red rash, often with small blisters, frequently occurring in linear streaks. Symptoms typically begin between 4 hours and 4 days after exposure, and will resolve on their own after 1-3 weeks. Contrary to popular belief, Rhus Dermatitis cannot "spread" via the fluid that may drain from the blisters. New lesions that seem to crop up later represent more recent exposure to the plant oil, thicker skin that required

more time for the oil to permeate, or sometimes an "over-reaction" of the immune system. Prevention of rash includes avoidance, adequate skin coverage, and frequent washing of body and clothes. Over-the-counter treatments for rash include Benadryl, calamine, and hydrocortisone, but prescriptions treatments for rash may include steroids (oral or injected) or medicine to reduce the itch.

4. Tick Bites can transmit Lyme Disease. Although this disease is rare in Nebraska, it can be very debilitating. When hiking or camping, try to stick to well-cleared paths. Perform a skin check daily, including easily forgotten areas like inside the ears and bellybutton. If you find a tick, use fine-tipped tweezers to pinch the head and remove the tick. Infected ticks typically must be attached to your skin for at least 24 hours before Lyme disease can be transmitted, but report to your doctor if you have a known tick bite followed by fever or a rash around the bite.

Keeping Your Peepers Healthy

August 22-26 is National Contact Lens Health Week. With this in mind, the Centers for Disease Control offer this charming advice to those of us who wear contact lenses: Contact Lenses Are Like Underwear! How, you might ask? The CDC reminds us that, when it comes to both underwear AND contact lenses, the following apply:

1. "Don't over-wear." Replace your contacts as often as you are told. Do not ever sleep in your contact lenses unless your contacts are specifically designed for that purpose. Get

a new contact lens case at least every three months.

2. "Avoid that Sketchy Pair." If a contact comes out and you are unable to immediately disinfect it with fresh contact solution, throw it out. Never use spit or water on your contacts. Never buy contact lenses from a place that does not require a prescription. Always wash your hands before handling your contacts.
3. "Carry a Spare Pair." Always have a pair of glasses handy in case you lose a contact or need to take them out. Take contacts out before swimming, showering or hot tubbing.

The Unexpected...

At FP Associates, we want to be your true "medical home" and strive to meet as many of your medical needs as possible. Unfortunately, injuries, infections and illnesses can pop up at any time. With this in mind, we try to have same-day appointments available, so that if you need urgent medical care, those needs can be met here, perhaps saving you the time and expense of an Urgent Care or Emergency Room visit. Next time you need a same-day appointment, call FP Associates first!

Total Solar Eclipse 2017

The total solar eclipse passes through Nebraska on August 21, 2017. Another event like this will not occur in our part of the world until 2024, so try not to miss it! But keep in mind that the only safe way to directly view the eclipsed sun is through special-purpose solar filters, such as "eclipse glasses." Visit <https://eclipse2017.nasa.gov> and www.eclipse2017.org for more exciting news about this spectacular event.

FP Associates, P.C. provides quality and compassionate care for your entire family.

As family physicians, we provide a wide range of medical care for patients of all ages. Physical exams, laboratory services, ECG, spirometry, and X-ray studies are done on site. Minor surgical procedures are performed in our office as well.

Monday and Wednesday evenings and Saturday morning appointments are available for urgent medical care and to accommodate your busy family schedules. Make FP Associates your medical home!

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