

Healthy News – Summer & Pool Time

Increase Skin Risk

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PROMOTE May is Melanoma and Skin Cancer Awareness Month, dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of sun safety and early detection of skin cancer. It is also the perfect time to think about protecting your skin as summer and pool time are rapidly approaching.

PREVENT Summer and pool time go together like popsicles and sticky smiles, but unlike popsicles and sticky smiles, they also increase sun risks. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the type of energy that comes from the sun. You can't see it or feel it, but it is always there during the daytime, even when the sun is blocked by clouds. UV radiation helps your body make Vitamin D, which supports strong bones, but too much can hurt your skin and cause sunburns. Over time, too much UV radiation can damage your skin and eyes. UV radiation exposure is higher in the summer. In fact, it is strongest from late morning through mid-afternoon (10 a.m. – 4 p.m.). Water and pool environment also increase the UV exposure because water reflects the rays, increasing the exposure from multiple angles.



PROTECT Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the U.S., with most cases caused by UV radiation. Childhood and adolescent sunburns significantly increase melanoma risk in later life. So, what can you do?

- Use sun screen consistently and correctly. Use a broad-spectrum (UVA/UVB) with a Sun Protective Factor (SPF) of 30 or greater that is water-resistant. Apply 1 ounce 15-30 minutes before sun exposure. Reapply every 2 hours and immediately after swimming, sweating or towel drying. Don't forget your lips. Lips are far more vulnerable to UV damage than most skin. Dermatology organizations recommend a SPF of 30 or higher with reapplication every 1-2 hours when outdoors.
- Wear protective clothing and accessories. Ultraviolet Protective Factor (UPF)-rated swim shirts/rash guards reduce UV exposure and remain protective when wet. Wide-brim hats (shade the face, ears and neck) and UV-blocking sun glasses protect high risk areas and eyes.
- Use umbrellas, shade sails or trees – especially during the peak hours of 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.; schedule swim lessons and outdoor activities earlier in the morning or later in the afternoon.
- Never use UV tanning beds.

Questions: Talk to a healthcare provider or contact South Heartland District Health Department, 606 Minnesota Ave, Hastings, NE, 402-462-6211.

Sources: Center for Disease Control (CDC)
U.S. Preventative Services Task Force (USPSTF)
American Cancer Society

