

Summer Safety

It's great to be outside in the sunshine – especially in the summer – but it's important to remember that the sun's heat and ultraviolet rays can be harmful. Make sure you take precautions every day.

Protect Your Body

Wear a hat and sunglasses to protect your eyes when out in the sun, and wear light clothing to cover your body. If you can see your hand through the fabric, the sun's rays will go right through it.

Apply sunscreen 15 to 20 minutes prior to sun exposure. Work the lotion into the skin well, and be careful to put it on ALL OVER – even on places you may not think of – like the tops of your ears and feet, and the back of your neck:

- Choose a sun block with SPF 15 or higher.
- Reapply sunscreen every 2 to 3 hours when you are perspiring, or when swimming or boating. Water intensifies the sun's rays making your skin burn much more easily.
- Sun block spray is not always the most effective sunscreen, since it must dry on the skin before it provides complete protection. Perspiration, water or clothing can all wipe it away before it's dry.
- YMCA counselors/staff cannot apply sunscreen at camp or at the pool, so send your kids to camp with a small bottle of sunscreen, and teach them to apply it themselves to arms, legs, neck, face and ears.

Avoid Dehydration

Drink extra fluids to keep your body well-hydrated in hot weather and when exercising outdoors. It is preferable to drink WATER – eight, 8-ounce glasses a day – to keep from becoming dehydrated.

- Water is ALWAYS the healthiest choice. Try to avoid other drinks such as sports drinks, juices, soda, fruit punch, lemonade and iced tea. Many of them contain too much sugar and/or chemicals.
- Drinks that contain caffeine cause you to urinate more often than normal, resulting in loss of fluids.

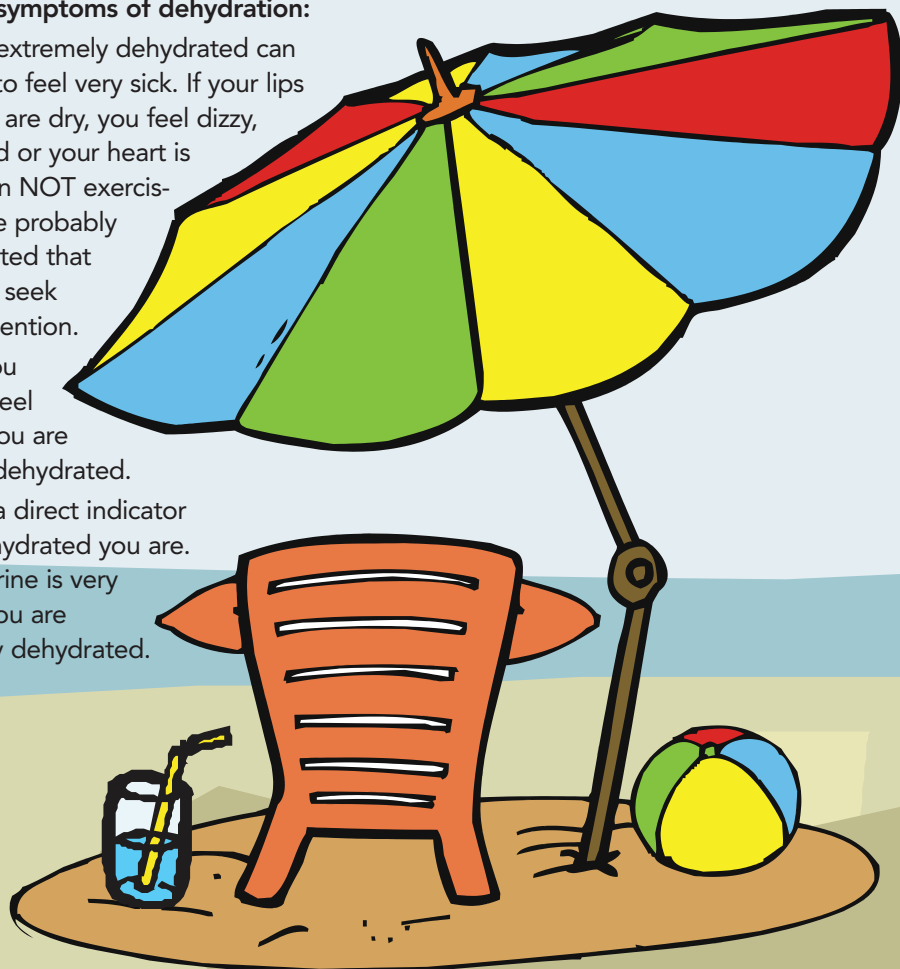
Signs and symptoms of dehydration:

Becoming extremely dehydrated can cause you to feel very sick. If your lips and mouth are dry, you feel dizzy, lightheaded or your heart is racing when NOT exercising, you are probably so dehydrated that you should seek medical attention.

- When you start to feel thirsty, you are already dehydrated.
- Urine is a direct indicator of how hydrated you are. If your urine is very yellow you are probably dehydrated.

Have More Fun in the Sun!

For fun activities, or to teach your kids about sun safety, check out www.kidshealth.org.



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