

Keeping your health and wellbeing in the know

MyHealth TALK

June 2012

Courtesy of Asset Health

DRINK UP!

MEN, SUMMER SWEAT AND H₂O

Who doesn't love summer? It's a time for enjoying warm breezes, blue skies, sandy beaches, swimming and those long-lingering daylight hours. Summer months find men eager to grill burgers, go boating and set off fireworks. Still, however much men enjoy being outdoors in summer; it may not be the best season for their health.

If you're a male, you sweat more during the summer (and humans sweat more than any other mammal). Consequently, your body is prone to depletion of water and electrolytes—so crucial for optimal performance. Electrolytes are required for your body to conduct electricity, which stimulates nerve endings and keeps your body moving. If your electrolytes are imbalanced while working outdoors or participating in sports, you may experience problems with hand-eye coordination, response time and dexterity. Also, your cells and organs don't function properly when electrolytes are out of whack.

Electrolytes are expelled as sweat after being consumed through foods and liquids. Common symptoms of electrolyte imbalance range from no symptoms to weakness, fatigue, headaches and confusion. Serious electrolyte depletion can lead to coma or rarely, death.

Play it safe and stay vigorous this summer by drinking enough of the right liquids before you need them. Fifteen minutes before you begin outdoor activities, drink at least 8 ounces of water and continue drinking it as you spend time outdoors, especially on hot days. When you feel thirsty, you're already experiencing *dehydration*. There's an easy way to find out if you are drinking enough water. If your urine looks more like iced tea than lemonade, you need to consume more H₂O.

Stay hydrated this summer but don't go overboard. Drinking too much water dilutes electrolytes and can kill you. Death from *hyper-hydration* occurs when lots of water is guzzled with few electrolytes ingested. Sports drinks supply electrolytes, potassium, sodium, and other minerals to replenish those lost through sweat. They also contain carbohydrates so they are absorbed more quickly than water, restoring your energy faster.

Whatever you take in, drink it cold in steady, small amounts. Get the most out of summer by downing enough liquids for maximum energy and enjoyment of the outdoors!



New Sunscreen Labels

When you're enjoying a beautiful summer day, the thought of applying sunscreen every two hours may be the last thing on your mind. For one thing, sunscreen can be downright confusing. Which SPF levels are best, and under what conditions? Is this stuff really waterproof?

Starting this year, you will see more and better information on labels for sunscreen products. The FDA has ordered sunscreen manufacturers to make it easier for consumers to understand labels and use their products. Although sunscreens were required to have new labels by June, the date has been pushed forward six months to ensure there will be enough sunscreen on shelves to meet this summer's demand. When you spend time outdoors, take good care of your skin by using sunscreen—and slathering it on the people you love!

Some product claims made in the past will be near impossible to make with the new labels. Sunscreens will be tested by the FDA before they can make the following claims:

Broad Spectrum

Sunscreens labeled as such will be required to pass a broad spectrum test, which determines whether a product provides efficient protection from both UVA and UVB rays.

Reduces Skin Cancer and Early Aging

Only sunscreens with SPF 15 and broad spectrum coverage will be permitted to make such claims.

Waterproof/Sweat Proof

Since most sunscreens are not actually waterproof or sweat proof, you'll see no more such claims, unless a brand submits its product for FDA testing and is approved.

Water Resistant

Sunscreens can be water resistant but they will be tested to determine how long they provide effective coverage while swimming or sweating, and the resistance period will be printed on the label.

All Day Protection

Forget about it. Sunscreens will not be able to claim they provide protection beyond two hours because none currently do.

Instant Protection

Once applied, sunscreens take from 15 to 30 minutes to become effective, so no such instant claims can be made.

SPF Level

A separate FDA proposal would stop manufacturers from playing the SPF game. The highest SPF sunscreens could claim would be SPF 50+ since there isn't any proof that higher levels provide any additional protection.

HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!

JUNE 17TH



SUMMER SAFE GRILLING

*"The story of barbecue is the story of America:
Settlers arrive on great unspoiled continent, discover wondrous riches,
set them on fire and eat them."*

Vince Staten

There's nothing quite like a savory steak, juicy burger or flavorful vegetables grilled outdoors to fire up summer appetites. Everyone seems to enjoy outdoor grilling; however, outdoor grills can cause serious accidents.

U.S. fire departments report they respond to an average of 8,200 home fires involving grills, hibachis or barbecues each year. The grill fires result in an average of 3,400 structure fires and 4,800 outside fires, causing 15 deaths, 120 injuries and \$75 million in property damage.

The major cause of gas grill fires is something (like a bug) blocking the fuel path, which causes gas to leak into places where it shouldn't go. Good preventative measures include regularly checking for gas leaks behind, underneath or inside your grill, where they are most likely to occur. Use a trigger spray with a small amount of detergent to check for leaks—never use a match because it can cause an explosion. If you have a leak, turn off the grill, the fuel tank, and disconnect everything (don't touch hot hoses or parts of the grill; they can give you third-degree burns).

Charcoal grills cause more fires than gas grills due to the dangers of lighting charcoal. Lighter fluid is dangerous because it turns into a heavy gas and explodes. Never use gasoline or kerosene to light charcoal—it can cause severe burns and bodily injury.

The good news is that you can take precautions to keep grilling safe in the summer. Here are some important tips to keep you, your family, friends and property safe during the great American barbecue season:

- 🔥 Clean grill surface before cooking
- 🔥 Clean grease from bottom of grill to minimize flare-ups; avoid excessively high heat or flames when grilling
- 🔥 Assign one person as 'fire chief' to keep an eye on the fire at all times
- 🔥 Keep food cool until you are ready to grill; bacteria loves food and stays alive until the temperature rises above 165° F
- 🔥 Make certain that the area where you grill is not near a house, papers, bushes, trees, shrubs, long grass, or electric wires, devices or plugs (extreme heat could make them catch fire or explode)
- 🔥 Your grilling area should be a no play zone for children and pets to protect them from dangers while grilling and when the grill is hot
- 🔥 Read the instruction manual if you have a new grill (grills are not all alike)
- 🔥 Grill meat and poultry thoroughly
- 🔥 Use a meat thermometer to be certain meat is fully cooked
- 🔥 Use a clean plate when serving grilled food—never place cooked food back on a plate or cutting board where you previously placed raw food
- 🔥 Refrigerate leftovers within two hours on a typical summer day; if it's 90 degrees or hotter, put food away within an hour



Garlic Grilled Asparagus

Ingredients

- 1 pound asparagus
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 6-12 cloves garlic
- ½ teaspoon salt

Directions

1. Rinse asparagus.
2. Dry spears with cloth or paper towel.
3. Trim ends.
4. Place 2 teaspoons of oil in grill pan or skillet.
5. Add asparagus, basting with remaining oil.
6. Mince garlic.
7. Sprinkle garlic and salt on asparagus.
8. Place pan on heated grill for 5-10 minutes.
9. Asparagus is done when spears are tender-crisp.

Safe Minimum Internal Grilling Temperatures

Beef, pork, lamb, and veal (steaks, roasts and chops): 145 °F

Whole poultry: 165 °F

Poultry breasts: 165 °F

Ground poultry: 165 °F

Hamburgers, ground meats: 160 °F