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**With arrival of summer temperatures, some tips to stay safe and healthy**

*Ten ways to prevent injury and illness during July 4 holiday and beyond*

As Oregonians prepare for the upcoming Fourth of July holiday, public health officials are reminding summer fun-seekers about a few simple steps they can take to stay safe and healthy.

With temperatures reaching the mid-90s in the Willamette Valley and above 100 in Eastern Oregon this week, people need to protect themselves from extreme heat conditions. High temperatures can be dangerous and even life-threatening, according to Bruce Gutelius, M.D., M.P.H., deputy state epidemiologist in the Oregon Health Authority's Public Health Division.

"Heat-related illnesses leading to heat exhaustion and heat stroke are a very real concern during extremely hot days," he says. For that reason, Gutelius says, people should make plans to stay cool, stay hydrated and stay informed. This means getting out of the sun, staying in air-conditioned environments when possible, drinking more water than usual, checking on neighbors and the elderly, and paying attention to weather conditions for the next several days.

Persons with a chronic medical condition such as heart disease or diabetes are particularly at risk for heat illness, so they should be closely monitored to make sure they have access to air conditioning, are drinking enough water and know how to keep cool.

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Drownings also occur when the weather warms up. “People often head for our state’s numerous rivers and lakes to cool off,” Gutelius said. “But those waterways come with hidden dangers, and every year we have a number of tragic deaths from drowning as a result.”

River water flows swiftly, and even the strongest swimmer can have a hard time staying above water, Gutelius said. Extremely cold water from mountain snow runoff also can overwhelm swimmers despite hot air temperatures. People should therefore take sensible precautions before getting in the water.

Food safety is another thing to keep in mind. Warmer weather makes it easier for food to spoil. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that each year roughly one in six Americans get sick from foodborne diseases. Cooking meats to a proper internal temperature and keeping cold foods cool helps slow growth of foodborne bacteria.

Ten ways to prevent injury and illness this Fourth of July:

- Stay in air-conditioned places and avoid sun when temperatures are high.
- Regardless of your level of activity, drink plenty of fluids – even if you are not thirsty, and especially when exercising or working outside.
- Avoid alcohol when swimming or boating and any time temperatures are high.
- Children should be supervised at all times in or near the water, and young and weaker swimmers should wear life jackets for swimming and boating.
- Don't swim alone or in bad weather.
- Use sunscreen with at least SPF 15. Apply it at least 10 minutes before going outside and re-apply every two hours.

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- Keep meat and poultry refrigerated until ready to use.
- In general, food should not be left out for more than two hours; during the summer heat, cut that time down to one hour.
- To prevent foodborne illness, don't use the same platter and utensils for raw and cooked meat and poultry.
- Cook meats to minimum internal temperatures to destroy harmful bacteria: ground beef, pork, lamb – 160 degrees Fahrenheit; poultry – 165 degrees.

For more information, visit the following Oregon Public Health Division tips pages:

- [Extreme heat](#)
- [Water recreation](#)
- [Food safety](#)

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