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Stay safe and healthy this holiday weekend

Ten ways to prevent injury and illness

As we all prepare for the upcoming Memorial Day holiday, public health officials want to remind everyone about a few simple steps they can take to stay safe and healthy.

“Every year we have a number of tragic deaths from drowning when the weather warms up,” said Mel Kohn, M.D., state health officer and health director for the Oregon Health Authority’s Public Health Division. “Oregon’s rivers and lakes often have cold water that flows swiftly, and this can make it hard for even the strongest swimmer to stay above water. Don’t swim or go boating in these bodies of water unless you know how to swim, and consider using a life jacket. Drinking alcohol before you swim is a particularly bad idea,” Kohn said.

Kohn also noted the importance of carefully supervising children around water, and wearing lifejackets when boating.

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 reduce the growth of foodborne bacteria.

(more)

Ten ways to prevent injury and illness this holiday weekend:

- Avoid alcohol when swimming or boating.
- Young and weaker swimmers should wear life jackets for swimming and boating.
- Don't swim alone or in bad weather.
- Supervise children at all times in and near the water.
- Prevent sunburns – use plenty of sunscreen.
- Drink lots of water to stay hydrated.
- Keep meat and poultry refrigerated until ready to use.
- Don't leave food out for more than two to three hours.
- To prevent foodborne illness, don't use the same platter and utensils for raw and cooked meat and poultry.
- Cook meats to minimum internal temperature to destroy harmful bacteria; 160 degrees F for ground beef, pork and lamb; 165 degrees F for poultry.

Oregon is known for attracting people to a wide variety of recreational opportunities. Whether it's swimming, surfing, fishing or some other outdoor play, you'll want to be aware of any current health alerts and advisories.

For more information on water recreation, please visit the health and recreation [website](#).

For more information on food safety, please visit the communicable disease [website](#).

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