

Your Guide to a Spectacular, Safe Summer ●●●

Since summer months mean plenty of time in the sun and on the water, every family should take steps to ensure the best parts of summer can be enjoyed to the fullest.



TIP:

For parents watching multiple young children, a verbal “hand off” of children while in the water when one parent needs a break or to use the restroom can be a great safety measure. “You’re in charge of Joey,” the parent exiting would say. The other adult would reply, “Got it. I’m in charge of Joey.”

Safe on the Water

Drowning is one of the leading causes of death of children, according to the Red Cross. More children ages 1-4 die from drowning than any other cause and drowning is the second leading cause of death for children ages 5-14, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Education and prevention are critical to ensure everyone is safe enjoying the beach or the pool this summer. Most drowning deaths for children under 15 years old happen in residential locations, so ensure your own pool or pools you visit have fences, are locked and you follow safety precautions.

The Red Cross recommends using “layers of protection” in and around the water, meaning not relying on just one thing to stay safe. Swimming lessons are recommended for all ages as well as CPR and rescue technique training for adults and older teens. Even if there are lifeguards, another adult should stay with and watch children free from distractions including cell phones. Children should be taught to always ask permission from an adult and to be accompanied by an adult while in the water. Children, inexperienced swimmers, and all boaters should wear U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets.

Even experienced swimmers should swim with a buddy and refrain from being under the influence of alcohol or drugs before water activities including supervising swimmers. The Red Cross still recommends wearing a life jacket when boating or fishing, even if you don’t plan to go into the water.

Communicate these safety expectations with everyone joining you on the boat, beach day, or pool day. Parents of children should discuss in advance which parent is in charge of watching which child(ren) and how to handle break times and bathroom breaks.



Safe in the Heat

Our bodies have the natural ability to maintain temperature by sweating, but summer makes this ability harder in hot temperatures, leading to the possibility of dehydration. Excessive time in the heat can lead to heat exhaustion and heatstroke, which can lead to delirium, organ damage, and worse, according to the National Safety Council.

It's best to stay inside during the hottest parts of the day to avoid the potential for dehydration and UV exposure. When preparing for a day outside, plan ahead. Drink a glass of water before bed the night before and upon waking. Ensure there's easy access to water and ample ways to refill throughout the day.

Also prepare by ensuring your family has an ample supply of sunscreen and backup sunscreen while on the go. This can mean a stash of sunscreen in the car as well as a purse or pool bag. Purchase UV-protectant gear such as sun hats, rash guards, and swimsuits. Make sure each member of the family has a pair of sunglasses available to them.

It's important to take breaks when spending time outside to reapply sunscreen, hydrate, and rest. Heat can more quickly and severely impact those whose jobs have them working in the heat, young children, people 65 years and older, and people with certain conditions or on certain medications. Be aware of what risk factors are present in your family or traveling group.

Getting Ahead: Sports Physicals

Avoid the back-to-school rush by scheduling sports physicals now. Staying active is important for kids and teens, and CalvertHealth is here to help them start the season strong.

CalvertHealth Primary Care offers school and sports physicals at all three convenient locations—Prince Frederick, Solomons, and Twin Beaches. These appointments include height, weight, blood pressure, vision screening, a physical exam, and a review of the student's medical history. Please note: a sports physical does not replace a comprehensive annual physical with your primary care provider.

Students should wear comfortable clothing such as loose shorts and a T-shirt. Anyone under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Please bring any required school physical forms with the student sections completed and signed, along with prior vaccination records and a photo ID. Insurance coverage may vary; please contact your provider directly for details.

If your child has had a well-child visit within the last year, an in-office appointment may not be necessary. You can drop off the required school forms for completion. Please note that a standard paperwork-processing fee may apply.

To schedule a sports physical, contact your CalvertHealth Primary Care office in Prince Frederick, Solomons, or Twin Beaches.

Sarah Fallin My Story:



Family Summer Hydration Tips

The second trimester of my second pregnancy is when dehydration caught up to me. Desperate to be outside in the summer of 2020 after being inside due to COVID protocols and a queasy first trimester, I went outside without much of a thought. I found myself experiencing dehydration so much easier while pregnant and it made me more in tune with my body's particular hydration needs. I learned some lessons and tips the hard way:

- ✓ When going anywhere outside in the summer, I fill up then pack mine and my kids' refillable water bottles in the car. I also pack a large extra water bottle with ice water. Far too many times, my kids have finished their water bottles and then mine. Having a refill station in the back of my car has saved me and my friends on outings!
- ✓ I keep electrolyte and flavor packets in my purse. Sometimes my kids get so busy and hot having fun outside that water is the last thing on their minds until it's too late. Lemonade is still better than not hydrating at all.
- ✓ Have a variety of no-sugar hydration options available in the summer. When it's hard to drink plain water, it can be a lot easier when it's infused with cut fruit. Sometimes, my kids even find plain soda water more palatable than regular water.
- ✓ Make it fun for kids. Try novelty straws, crushed, ice, cut fruit, or fun ice cube shapes.
- ✓ I move all my outdoor workouts indoors in the summer. While some people may be able to adjust by walking or running in the early morning hours or the evening, the temperature doesn't drop enough for me when I'm active outside. Know your body!
- ✓ I stock up on cheap kids' sunglasses from the dollar store and keep them in a basket near our front entrance and some spares in the car. This way, they're easily accessible and can be borrowed by friends who come over or forget them while out and about.