



## TIPS TO MAKE THE SUMMER A SAFE ONE FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

The following tips from the Florida Department of Health will make the summer months a safe and healthy one for you, your family and all Floridians.

### SWIMMING SAFETY

- **Do not jump or dive into unknown waters.** Diving accidents can occur when jumping or diving into water of unknown depth. Underwater structures (stumps, trash) may be unseen.
- **Swim in approved areas** and preferably in areas that offer lifeguard observation.
- **Avoid swimming in stagnant or unclean waters.** In all freshwater lakes, the possibility exists of contracting a fatal infection of the brain (encephalitis) from an ameba in the water. The risk of this is extremely rare (only 20 cases in over 30 years), however, the risk increases as water temperatures exceed 86 degrees, or in water that is stagnant. The use of nose plugs, while offering some protection, has not been proven scientifically.
- **Seek shelter during thunderstorms.** Summertime in Florida brings afternoon thunderstorms, some of which produce strong lightning activity. These storms can develop and move rapidly across an area. DO NOT seek shelter under trees or other potential lightning targets.

### FOOD PROTECTION

- **Always wash your hands** with hot, soapy water before and after handling food and between handling raw and cooked foods.
- **Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.** With the increasing heat of the summer months, bacterial growth in food can be rapid. Keep all perishable foods either hot (greater than 140 degrees Fahrenheit) or cold (41 degrees Fahrenheit or less).
- **Use only approved flammables to light charcoal.** The use of other materials such as gasoline is a severe safety hazard and they should NOT be used.

### HEAT RELATED ILLNESS

- **Do not leave children or pets unattended in automobiles.** Temperatures inside automobiles can quickly exceed 130 degrees. Children and pets can be quickly overcome in a few minutes.
- **Avoid heat overexposure.** Summer temperatures can cause heat stress, exhaustion, or stroke. When exercising, be sure to maintain proper hydration by consuming water. Avoid using alcohol-based drinks.
- **Do not sunburn.** Overexposure to the sun can lead to higher rates of skin cancers later in life. Use sunscreens and reapply often based upon manufacturers' recommendations.

### MOSQUITO BORNE DISEASES

The summer months increase the potential of infection with encephalitis from viruses carried by mosquitoes, including Eastern Equine, St. Louis and West Nile viruses. Observation of the five **D**'s of protection reduce the low risk of infection: Avoid unprotected outdoor activity at **D**usk and **D**awn (when mosquitoes are to be most active), use **D**EET repellants (and permethrin sprays as directed by the manufacturer), **D**ress to cover skin with long sleeve shirts and pants if out when mosquitoes are feeding, and **D**rain potential mosquito breeding sites from around your house.

### ALWAYS WEAR SEATBELTS AND DRIVE SAFELY!

While minding these basic precautions, we can all enjoy the beauty and fun our state has to offer.