

# HEALTHY Prescriptions



## OVERHEATING IN THE SUMMER SUN

Very hot and humid weather causes an increase in internal body temperature, which places great demands upon the body's cooling mechanisms. There is a limit beyond which these mechanisms can no longer maintain a normal internal temperature of 98.6 degrees. If the body temperature continues to rise without sufficient cooling, a serious heat disorder can occur. Those people particularly at risk are:



- Workers in hot environments, especially if the job requires physical labor
- Athletes and frequent exercisers
- Infants, young children, and elderly people
- The chronically ill, and people with heart or circulatory problems
- Alcoholics, drug abusers.

### Tips to beat the summer heat:

Pay attention to weather reports and adjust daily routines accordingly.



Schedule physically strenuous activities for cooler times.

- Allow several days to adjust to hot environments.
- Dress in light, loose, cotton clothing. Wide-brimmed hats help keep you cool as well.

When working outside, take periodic rest breaks in a cool area.

Drink plenty of noncarbonated fluids before, during, and after physical activities. Avoid alcohol and caffeine, which are diuretics—substances that increase water loss via urine.



Never leave children or pets inside a car, even if the windows are open.

If you are taking medication, ask your doctor about its side effects.

Keep cool with fans, air conditioning, and cool baths or showers.



Get plenty of sleep and eat light, nutritious, and non-fatty meals.

Be aware that when active in a hot, dry climate, for example when playing tennis, salt as well as water are lost in sweat. Under such conditions, restriction of dietary salt by healthy individuals may be unwise. However, salt tablets are rarely necessary.



## Summer Smoothie



- 1 cup plain low-fat yogurt
- 1 cup apple or pineapple juice
- 5 strawberries
- 1 banana
- 3 ice cubes (crushed)



### Directions:

- Combine all ingredients in a blender.
- Blend until smooth.
- Serve at once.

Makes 3 servings

## Backpacks, continued from page 3

possible, then go back outside to play, to cut down the amount of time you're carrying a heavy load.

- Don't put off homework. Have you ever had a book report due that you let go until the last minute? Did that mean you had to lug home a backpack full of heavy library books? Try doing a little bit of homework each



night so your bag won't be overflowing with books.

When you follow the backpack rules, you'll be doing your back a favor and even saving yourself from some pain!

## Back to school blues

Lots of kids feel nervous or even scared on the first day of school because of all the new things: new teachers, new friends, and maybe even a new school. Luckily, these "new" worries only stick around for a

little while. You can beat the back to school blues by knowing what to expect.

## Back to School Tips

- Get enough sleep so you will be able to stay awake in class.
- Eat a balanced breakfast to give you the energy you will need.



- Try to go to school with a positive attitude every day (although it's OK to have a blue funk sometimes).
- Give school your best effort.
- Develop good work habits. That means writing down your assignments and turning in your homework on time.
- Take your time with assignments in and out of the classroom. If you don't understand something, ask the teacher.
- Keep a sense of humor.



## 2003 NATIONAL HEALTH AND NUTRITION OBSERVANCES

### July

Eye Injury Prevention Month  
Hemochromatosis Screening Awareness Month  
International Group B Strep Awareness Month  
Light the Night for Sight Month  
National Therapeutic Recreation Week  
(14th-18th)  
Fireworks Safety Month (June 1st-July 4th)

### August

Amblyopia Awareness Month  
Cataract Awareness Month  
National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM)  
National Minority Donor Awareness Day (1st)  
Psoriasis Awareness Month  
Spinal Muscular Atrophy Awareness Month  
World Breastfeeding Week (1st-7th)

### Resources/References:

The American Council on Science & Health:  
[www.acsh.org](http://www.acsh.org)  
National Safety Council: [www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org)  
KidsHealth: <http://kidshealth.org>

[www.bottledwater.org](http://www.bottledwater.org)

For additional resources contact, the  
**Southern University Agricultural Research  
and Extension Center** at (225) 771-2242.

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# HEALTHY *P*rescriptions



## HEALTH AND SAFETY TIPS FOR SUMMER

### SKIN PROTECTION

Sunbathing is a favorite summer activity for some. However, this activity can put you at risk of getting sunburned. It is now thought that the long-term effect of severe sunburn may be an increased likelihood of various types of skin cancer. Therefore, protecting yourself from the sun has long-term benefits. Protecting your skin from the sun can help prevent premature aging of the skin and reduce your risk of skin cancers, including the serious skin cancer, melanoma.



Melanoma is a dark-colored malignant mole or tumor. Some melanomas and superficial skin cancers have been linked to overexposure to sunlight.

To reduce your risk of cancer, as well as prevent sunburn, remember that moderation is the key to sun exposure, along with some well-planned protection against the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays. There are two types of UV radiation: UVA

and UVB. Both are components of sunlight that damage the skin. The UVB radiation is responsible for the burning effect of sunlight and contributes to cellular changes in skin that can lead to cancer. UVA, which once was thought to be harmless tanning rays, now is also implicated in the development of skin cancer.

Therefore, it is important to use a good sunscreen with high Sun Protection Factor (SPF) ratings. SPF ratings are multipliers of the



skin's exposure time before burning. For example, an SPF of 5 means that a person can stay in the sunlight without burning five times longer than he/she could without sunscreen. Keep in mind that the SPF rating system was developed to protect against sunburn typically caused by UV B radiation. There is no rating system yet for UVA.

An SPF of 15 or above is recommended. The sunscreen should be applied 15 to 30 minutes before going outdoors, and reapplied after swimming or engaging in vigorous physical activity. Please remember that cocoa butter, baby oil, and mineral oil are not sunscreens and do not protect you from the sun's rays.

In addition, be sure to tune in to your local weather channel to get advance notice of how intense the sun will be in your area — the UV index. The index ranges from 0-10, with 10 being the most intense. The higher the index, the more important sunscreen use will be.

Also, remember that the sun's rays are most intense (at any index level) between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., so plan exposure accordingly.

A few medicines can cause photosensitivity, making you more susceptible to the sun's ultraviolet light; therefore, you are more likely to get sunburn. Examples of such compounds include some acne medications, oral contraceptives containing estrogen, tetracyclines and sulfa drugs. Your doctor or pharmacist can inform you if a prescription drug is likely to cause this problem.



### EYE PROTECTION

Sunglasses should not be used only as a fashion accessory. Exotic lens colors may be stylish, but for real protection, the best choice for lens color is plain gray, with green as a second choice. Sunglasses actually provide protection for your eyes on sunny days. They should block 99 to 100 percent of UVA and UVB radiation and should be labeled as doing so. Over-exposure of eyes to ultraviolet radiation increases the risk of cataract formation. Sunglasses should not be worn at night. If you find it too inconvenient to remove

them at night, or when indoors, you may want to try light sensitive or photochromic lenses, which darken and lighten automatically in response to changes in lighting.



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# Safety in and on the Water



For many of us, summer would not be summer without swimming and water sports. These activities, however, can lead to tragedy if you are unfamiliar with water safety precautions. Each year approximately 7,000 people drown in the United States, and most of these deaths could have been prevented. Following are some of the most basic precautions that can keep you from becoming a statistic.

## Tips for safe swimming and diving

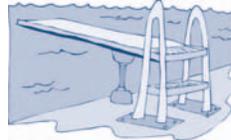
- Learn to swim and dive well enough so you can survive in the water in an emergency.



- Do not swim in unsupervised areas.
- Do not swim or dive alone or when the only other people in the water are non-swimmers. Their presence might seem reassuring, but they would be of little help in an emergency.
- Do not swim or dive if you have been drinking alcoholic beverages. Alcohol is the underlying

cause of many drownings and other accidents because it impairs both judgment and coordination.

- Stay out of the water during electrical storms.
- Do not dive into shallow or unfamiliar waters. A resulting neck injury can lead to paralysis.
- Stay a safe distance away from diving boards, platforms, and floats.



## Safety tips for ponds and swimming holes

- Mark off safe swimming areas with buoyed lines.
- Remove underwater debris, such as bottles and cans, from swimming areas.
- Do not use areas near steeply sloping banks for swimming.
- Post warning signs in dangerous areas where people should not swim.
- Have the water checked for chemical and sanitary quality and approved by the local health department.
- Make sure that floats, diving boards, piers, and similar structures are well built and securely anchored in place.
- Post emergency instructions, emergency telephone numbers, and rules for the swimming area.



## "DON'T FORGET THE WATER"

by De'Shoin York Friendship  
Nutrition Specialist

Keeping children properly hydrated during the summer months is very important to their overall health. The following are "Do's and Don'ts" for keeping children hydrated.

### Do's

- Drink at least 8 glasses of water a day to remain hydrated. Encourage your kids to do the same, active children lose 2 or more quarts of water daily so their bodies need to be continuously replenished.
- Drink 8-10 oz. of water every 15 minutes during a run and another 10-12 oz. immediately following your workout. An athlete can lose from 6-10 pounds, almost all of it water, during a 10K race in hot weather.
- Have your child take water breaks every 15-20 minutes while playing outside or participating in a sports activity. Get your kids in the habit of always carrying cold water in their beverage holder when they go for a bike ride.
- When packing your car for a weekend trip, don't forget to include water in the cooler. Freeze a partially full bottle of water the night before a trip and fill it with more bottled water before you leave and you'll have instant chilled water all day long.



### Don'ts

- Don't overdo it. Take time throughout the day for a glass of water whether or not you feel you need it. If you wait until you feel thirsty, you're already experiencing the signs of dehydration.
- Don't substitute soda or juice as a proper beverage to prevent dehydration. Most sodas contain sugar and caffeine which may speed up dehydration.
- Don't drink surface water from lakes, rivers or pools. This water is often untreated and could contain harmful contaminants.
- Don't expect the coach or other adult supervisors to provide the beverages for your child



## Safety tips for beaches

- Swim in areas supervised by lifeguards.



- If you get caught in a current, swim with it or diagonally across it until you can get free or call for help. Do not attempt to swim against a current.

- Do not use breakable objects on the beach.

- Do not leave children unattended, even in areas where lifeguards are on duty.



- If you want to try a long distance swim, swim parallel to the shore and close enough to the shore so that you can reach it easily.



- Do not strike up conversations with lifeguards or interfere in any other way with the performance of their jobs.

- If boating at the beach, all boat occupants should wear Coast Guard approved life jackets.



- Know the “rules of the road” of the area in which you are boating.

- Remember that alcohol and driving don’t mix — whether the vehicle is a car, powerboat, jet ski, or canoe.



# Back to School



**B**ack to school shopping may be the only time you think about your backpack. However, you should give

some thought to backpacks all year because using them the wrong way can cause back pain. Backpacks make it easy to carry your school supplies. When used correctly, backpacks are the best way to carry your stuff. This is because the strongest muscles in the body, the back and the stomach muscles, should be used to support the weight of the pack. Using these strong muscles to carry your book bag helps prevent shoulder or neck injuries.



A child should carry no more than 10% of his/her body weight in a backpack. For example, if a child weighs 80 pounds, then the book bag should weigh not more than 8 pounds. A load this size should be light enough allow the child to walk and stand up straight without hunching forward or leaning to the side.



## Tips for using backpacks

You can't stop going to school just because your backpack is too heavy. (Sorry, this excuse doesn't work!) So what can you do? Try these tips to stop backpack pain in its tracks:

- Make sure you have a pack with two padded straps that go over your shoulders. The wider the straps, the better.

- Forget about packs that go over one shoulder or across your chest (often called messenger bags) because they don't allow you to center the weight evenly over your spine.



- Look for a pack with multiple compartments inside so the weight can be distributed more evenly.

- Find a pack with a waist belt. They're great for helping to distribute the weight of your books more evenly across your body.

- Consider a pack with wheels. There are guidelines and considerations to keep



in mind with this kind of pack. Many schools and school districts don't allow rolling backpacks due to kids tripping over them in the halls. Be sure you find out if you can have one and find out the right way to pack it and carry it to be safe.

- Pay attention when you pack. Put the heaviest books closest to your body when you pack your backpack to reduce strain on your shoulders and neck.

- Use your desk or locker. Don't carry around books that you don't need. Use your locker or your desk to store extra books and papers.



- Don't linger with a loaded pack. The longer you carry your pack, the more pressure you're placing upon your back.

If you walk home from school, drop off your backpack as soon as

# Reading, Writing and Breakfast

by De'Shoin York Friendship

Help your child make the honor roll this year; the nutrition honor roll that is. Nutrition and learning go hand in hand and kids who are nutritionally fit are more likely to have the energy, stamina and self-esteem that enhance their ability to learn and be active.



Start kids out with a healthy breakfast. For children and teens a morning meal is especially important. Research shows that breakfast skippers often feel tired, irritable or restless in the morning, but those who regularly eat a morning meal have a better attitude towards school and have more energy by late morning. Kids who eat breakfast tend to have more strength and endurance, and better concentration and problem-solving ability.



Studies suggest breakfast not only has a significant effect on learning, it may help control weight and reduce the risk for heart disease. Breakfast eaters are less likely to be very hungry and they tend to eat less fat during the day.



## Some suggestions:

**Keep quick-to-fix foods on hand or get breakfast foods ready the night before, if time is an issue.**

- breakfast cereal
- bagels
- toaster waffles
- yogurt
- canned and fresh fruit
- juice
- milk
- cheese and cottage cheese



## Bring your breakfast with you

- a carton of yogurt
- a bagel, spread with peanut butter
- grapes
- crackers
- cheese



Overall, a well-nourished child is a ready-to-learn child. Food nourishes

at every age and stage in a child's life and proper nutrition is crucial for social, emotional, and psychological development. Teaching children how to eat healthy will enable them to establish a foundation of good nutrition and healthy lifestyle habits.



## Happy Trails Mix

**Makes 8 servings**

Honey Nut Cereal	2 cups
Corn Squares Cereal	2 cups
Peanuts	1 cup
Pineapple chips	1/2 cup
Raisins	1 cup
Banana chips	1/2 cup
Apricots, dried	1/2 cup

### Directions:

In a large bowl, combine all ingredients; mix well. Store in a loosely covered container.



### Resources/References:

[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org), American Dietetic Association Offers Tips.

Bridget McManamon & Lori Ferme.

[www.bottledwater.org](http://www.bottledwater.org)

For additional resources, contact the Southern University Agricultural Research and Extension Center at (225) 771-2242.

### For Additional Information Contact:

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