

Summer Safety for Seniors

Summer is the time to enjoy the outdoors! However, the sunshine, UV rays and heat can also bring dangers, especially for seniors, including sunburn, eye damage, dehydration, heat exhaustion and more.

Use these simple 8 tips to improve your safety during the summer months:

Stay hydrated

Don't stay out too long

Check the forecast & wear the right clothes

Always use sunscreen

Check your prescriptions' side effects

Turn on the A/C

Beware of heat-related illnesses

Be an early bird or night owl

Stay Hydrated

Aim to drink 6-8 glasses of water a day. For seniors, the feeling of thirst decreases as we age, so be sure to increase your water intake if you are exercising or doing any kind of prolonged physical activity. Fluids should be non-alcoholic and decaffeinated, carbonated sodas may taste good, but they only further your dehydration. Water, sports drinks or juice are the best.

Don't stay out too long

On those hot days, keep your plans for outdoor activities reasonably short. Stick to a couple of hours and then head inside for a break. Remember: you don't always feel the effect the sun is having on you in the moment – temper your time outside on hot days.

Check the forecast and wear the right clothes

Know what to expect from the weather before going out. Don't risk being caught outdoors when the record temperatures hit. Wear loose, lightweight, and light-colored long sleeves to help protect skin from sun, while allowing your skin to breathe. Use wide brimmed hats to keep

the sun off your face & neck and full coverage sunglasses (wrap around) for the best protection.

Use Sunscreen

Use sunscreen that blocks both UVA and UVB rays, have a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or more. Apply it about 15-30 minutes before exposure, reapply frequently. *Have it handy, carry it in your car and purse!*

Check your medications.

Some medications make people more sensitive to the sun. Review your prescriptions with your doctor or pharmacist.

Turn on your air conditioning.

During a heat wave, if you don't have central air or a room air conditioner, spend your day at locations with air conditioning, a friend's house, the movies, a restaurant. If you do not have an air conditioner, consider buying one. The Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program may help if the cost is prohibitive.

I-LERT

The Inter-Lutheran Emergency Response Team is a collaborative ministry between the Pacifica and Southwest California Synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, and the Pacific Southwest District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Our mission is to equip Lutheran congregations and entities to prepare for and respond in the event of a disaster.

Watch for early warning signs of heat-related illnesses.

Research & review the symptoms for dehydration, heat stroke, heat exhaustion, and heat syncope. Some signs to look for are confusion, disorientation, dry skin, excessive tiredness, headache, lethargy, nausea, and a rapid pulse. Seek medical attention immediately.

Be an early bird or night owl.

The sun is strongest between 10 am and 4 pm. Try to limit your outdoor activity to the morning or evening, when the temperature is lower, and the sun is less intense.

Remember, it only takes about 15 minutes for the sun to damage unprotected skin. You may not notice it immediately, but the damage is there. Sunburn can dehydrate your body too, increase your fluid intake.