Summer Tips for a Healthy Heart

*The American Heart Association and American Stroke Association provides 10 tips to keep your family happy and healthy this summer.*

*Long Island, NY –* Summer can bring many happy memories – family vacations, summer camp, days at the shore, staying up late and watching the sun set.  No matter what your summer traditions include, be sure to keep in mind your heart and brain health throughout the longer daylight hours.

According to the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association, heart disease and stroke remain the No. 1 and No. 5 causes of death in the U.S., yet 80 percent of these diseases are preventable with simple lifestyle modifications, such as healthy eating and regular exercise.

According to the American Heart Association, “Summer is the perfect time to enjoy heart-healthy seasonal produce and to add physical activity to your daily routine,” “But remember to take precautions when spending time by the water and when exercising in the heat.”

Here are the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association’s top 10 tips for a heart-healthy summer:

1. **Learn Hands-Only CPR.** Days by the pool and ocean can be fun, but always be prepared for the unthinkable.  Hands-Only CPR has only two steps: If you see a teen or adult suddenly collapse, 1) Call 9-1-1, and 2) Press hard and fast in the center of the chest.  View a short video by visiting [www.heart.org/handsonlycpr](https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.heart.org%2Fhandsonlycpr&data=02%7C01%7CDSRIP%40stonybrookmedicine.edu%7C3179541d6e844ee1d7c708d5d2c16788%7Ceafa1b31b194425db36656c215b7760c%7C0%7C0%7C636646650505906582&sdata=fZjaoa512%2Fo4DTCiXbAM08q2V8p2m2MpVN9lOsJnHHg%3D&reserved=0)
2. **Stay hydrated.**  Drink plenty of fluids (preferably water) throughout the day and before, during and after working out to maintain salt-water balance.  Avoid caffeine and alcoholic beverages.
3. **Exercise smarter, not harder.** Plan your workout for the cooler parts of the day – either early morning or early evening when the sun’s radiation is at its least.  If you must exercise during the hottest part of the day or in high humidity, decrease exercise intensity and duration.  And remember, you can get a great workout indoors by going to a gym or walking at the mall.
4. **Dress the part.** Wear minimal amounts of clothing that allow for quick evaporation of sweat.  Choose lightweight, light-colored and breathable fabrics, such as cotton.
5. **Choose Fresh Veggies.** Take advantage of fresh seasonal veggies.  Load up skewers with mushrooms, peppers, cherry tomatoes, zucchini, yellow squash or other veggies.  Spray lightly with olive oil cooking spray and grill until lightly blackened.
6. **Pack to play.** When taking a family road trip, plan to incorporate regular physical activity into your daily routine.  Pack a football, soccer ball, Frisbee or paddle ball so that you can be physically active while away.
7. **Enjoy fruit pops.** Homemade freezer pops are an easy, fun treat for kids to make and enjoy.  Mash up fruit like peaches, grapes, berries or watermelon and put into paper cups, insert a popsicle stick and freeze overnight.
8. **Protect yourself from the sun.** Wear wide-brimmed hats, always apply water-resistant sunscreen with at least SPF 15 and reapply sunscreen every 2 hours.
9. **Head indoors.** When the heat gets unbearable, try indoor activities at your local YMCA or rec center like basketball, swimming, yoga or racquetball.
10. **Know the signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.**

**Symptoms of heat exhaustion:**

* headaches
* heavy sweating
* cold, moist skin, chills
* dizziness or fainting
* a weak and rapid pulse
* muscle cramps
* fast, shallow breathing
* nausea, vomiting or both

If you experience these symptoms, move to a cooler place, stop exercising and cool down immediately by dousing yourself with cold water and rehydrating. You may need to seek medical attention.  
  
**Symptoms of heat stroke:**

* warm, dry skin with no sweating
* strong and rapid pulse
* confusion and/or unconsciousness
* high fever
* throbbing headaches
* nausea, vomiting or both

If you experience these symptoms, seek medical attention right away.

For more tips on staying active and healthy this summer, visit <https://healthyforgood.heart.org>