



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE**
Thomas A. Farley, MD, MPH
Commissioner

Summer Safety Tip Sheet: July 2011

Summer is a great time to enjoy the outdoors, but remember to play it safe. The Health Department reminds New Yorkers about summertime health and safety risks and what they can do to prevent them.

Heat

Hot and humid summer weather can cause serious illness. Older adults, people with heart or lung disease, obesity or mental illness and anyone using drugs or alcohol are at especially high risk for serious illness. Workers and athletes need to be especially careful when the weather gets hot.

- Use an air conditioner during a heat wave. If you do not have an air conditioner, go to a cool place like a neighbor's, friend's or families home, library or NYC Cooling Center (http://www.nyc.gov/html/oem/html/hazards/heat_cooling.shtml).
- Drink water even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid drinks with alcohol, caffeine or lots of sugar.
- Check on neighbors, friends and family to make sure they are keeping cool.
- Seek shade. If you must be in the sun, wear a hat to shade your face and head, sunscreen, and thin, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing to cover as much skin as possible.
- Never leave your children or pets in the car.
- If you have to be out working or exercising in the sun: take frequent breaks, reduce the intensity of your exertion and try to work or exercise during the coolest times of the day.
- To learn more about preventing heat illness, visit www.nyc.gov/health/heat

Water safety

Swimming is a great way to get exercise while staying cool in the summer, but remember to follow these key safety tips.

- Learn how to swim.
 - The New York City Parks Department offers a variety of free swim programs. To learn more, visit: http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_things_to_do/programs/ap_aquatics.html
- Swim only in designated areas when lifeguards are on duty and always obey the lifeguards' instructions.
 - Even if you are a good swimmer, never swim alone and check rip currents and other water conditions at the beach.
 -



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE**
Thomas A. Farley, MD, MPH
Commissioner

- Supervise children closely. Practice “touch” supervision by keeping young children within arm’s reach.
- Learn CPR. Resources for CPR classes in NYC can be found on the NYC DOHMH website: http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/bt/cpr_trainingfacts.shtml
- Don't drink alcohol in or around the water or when supervising children.
- The Health Department regularly tests the city’s beach water and inspects beaches to check for compliance with local, state and federal water safety standards.
- Beach advisories, closures and water quality test results are posted and regularly updated at www.nyc.gov/health/beach. You can also get this information by calling 311 and by signing up with Notify NYC at www.notify.gov/NotifyNYC. Notify NYC sends up to date information via Twitter, RSS, E-Mail and SMS.

Sun Safety

Protection from sun exposure is very important. Sunburn is not only painful, it is a major risk factor for developing skin cancer, especially for children and teenagers.

- Protect your skin from the sun:
 - Stay in the shade, particularly between the hours of 10:00am and 4:00pm.
 - Cover up in light-colored, loose-fitting clothing, wear a hat and wear sunglasses.
 - Use sunscreen. Reapply it every two hours or after swimming or sweating.
- Keep young children out of the sun. Keep infants in the shade and dress them in lightweight clothes and brimmed hats.
- For more information, visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/chooseyourcover/>, http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/doc/dfd_poster.pdf, and <http://www.skincancerprevention.org/skin-cancer/prevention-tips>

Playground Safety

Playgrounds are great places for children to play, get exercise, and explore. New York City’s Parks Department maintains more than 1,000 playgrounds.

- Always supervise children closely.
- Be careful on hot surfaces. Metal and rubber surfaces can become very hot on sunny summer days and burn bare skin. Make sure children keep their shoes on at the playground – and give surfaces like slides a “test touch” before sitting on them.
- For more information on playground safety, visit the Parks Department’s web site: http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_things_to_do/facilities/playitsafe.html



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE
Thomas A. Farley, MD, MPH
Commissioner

Barbecue Safety

Barbecue season is here, but in the U.S. thousands of people are injured when grilling outdoors each year.

- Never use a propane barbecue grill on a balcony, terrace or roof. It is both dangerous and illegal in NYC.
- Never grill/barbecue indoors or in enclosed areas, like garages, tents or trailers. It's a fire hazard, and dangerous levels of carbon monoxide can build up and make you sick.
- Make sure everyone knows to ***Stop, Drop and Roll*** in case a piece of clothing does catch fire. Call 911 in an emergency.
- For more information on summer fire safety, including barbecue safety, visit FDNY's web site:

http://www.nyc.gov/html/fdny/pdf/safety/fire_safety_education/2010_02/17_summer_fire_safety_english.pdf