



National Safety Month

PATHWAYS to INJURY PREVENTION

Spotlight on Summer

The summer months offer a lot more time to go outdoors and enjoy nature. There are many fun things to do, from hiking to swimming, and fun with fireworks on the fourth, but be sure to take precautions before setting out to do any of these activities.



Injuries are predictable and preventable! The National Safety Council has declared June National Safety Month so read on to get safety tips for summer!

Common Camping Dangers

One common mistake made by camping families is not being ready for seasonal transitions regarding proper clothing and equipment. Storms blow in and out during all seasons and there can be sudden shifts in temperatures in spring and fall, particularly on high mountains. Precipitation and wind lead to rapid cooling, especially when temperatures drop at nightfall.

Excessive heat can be a problem for young children whose sweat glands are not fully developed until

adolescence. On hot days, hike in the cooler mornings and evenings. During the day, spend time in shaded areas. Wear skin protection whenever you or your kids are exposed to the sun, such as hats, sunscreen, and cotton clothes.

Another common problem is getting lost.

Teach your kids how to recognize landmarks at the campsite and on hikes. While hiking, encourage them to turn around and look at the trail to familiarize themselves with their surroundings. Teach them to remain where they are and stay calm if they are lost. Kids should wear whistles (whistles can be heard farther away than the human voice) and know the universal help signal of three blows or loud sounds. Take your cell phone along in case you can get a signal.



For wilderness trekking, always carry a topographical map and compass.

Heat Illness

Beat the heat this summer by staying hydrated before, during, and after any outdoor activity. Heat illnesses range from mild heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and severe heat stroke.



Did you know?

Firework Injuries

June - July 4th is National Fireworks Safety Month, so celebrate responsibly and safely. Fireworks are responsible for several injuries each summer:

- **Fireworks devices were involved in an estimated 9,200 injuries treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms in 2006 (the latest year for which data is available).**
- **An estimated 6,400 injuries were treated in hospital emergency rooms during the one-month period surrounding the Fourth of July (June 16-July 16).**
- **Eyes were the second most commonly injured part of the body with an estimated 1,500 fireworks-related eye injuries treated in the same one-month period of 2006.**
- **Firecrackers accounted for 20% of all injuries followed by rockets (13%) and sparklers (16%).**
- **Sparklers caused the greatest number of injuries in children ages 14 and younger, followed by firecrackers and rockets.**

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All heat illnesses are easily prevented by drinking plenty of fluids. High humidity and increased temperatures cause our bodies to produce more internal heat and the way we release it is through sweating and radiating heat through our skin.

If a person begins to show signs of cramping, fatigue, weakness, and irritability, bring that person into the shade and make sure they get plenty of fluids.

Rattlesnakes 101

As summer draws people to the outdoors, it is a good idea to remember that other animals are also drawn to the warmer weather. In California, encounters with snakes become inevitable after spring. Rattlesnakes are found from sea level to the inland prairies, desert areas, and to the mountains at elevations of more than 10,000 feet, enjoying the outdoors means learning to avoid contact with rattlesnakes.

In winter, I get up at night
And dress by yellow candle-light.
In summer, quite the other way,
I have to go to bed by day.
-- Robert Louis Stevenson



Generally not aggressive, rattlesnakes strike when threatened or deliberately provoked, but given enough space they will retreat. Most snake bites occur when rattlesnakes are handled or accidentally touched by someone walking or climbing. The majority of snakebites occur on the hands, feet and ankles.

First, know that rattlesnakes are not confined to rural areas. They have been found near urban areas, in river or lakeside parks, and at golf courses. Be aware that startled rattlesnakes may not rattle before striking defensively. There are

several safety measures that can be taken to reduce the likelihood of startling a rattlesnake.

- When hiking, stick to well-used trails and wear over-the-ankle boots and loose-fitting long pants. Avoid tall grass, weeds and heavy underbrush where snakes may hide during the day.
- Do not step or put your hands where you cannot see and avoid wandering around in the dark. Step ON logs and rocks, never over them, and be especially careful when climbing rocks or gathering firewood. Check out stumps or logs before sitting down and shake out sleeping bags before use.
- Never grab "sticks" or "branches" while swimming in lakes and rivers. Rattlesnakes can swim.
- Be careful when stepping over the doorstep as well. Snakes like to crawl along the edge of buildings where they are protected on one side.
- Never hike alone. Always have someone with you who can assist in an emergency.
- Do not handle a freshly killed snake, it can still inject venom.

Northern vs Southern Rattlesnakes of California



Northern California:
Northern Pacific Rattlesnake



Southern California:
Northern Mohave Rattlesnake



For more information visit the California Department of Fish and Game at: <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/news/issues/snake.html>

