



# Summer Advice

## Sun Safety

### Infants

- ☐ Infants under 6 months of age should avoid sun exposure as much as possible.
- ☐ Do not put your baby in direct sunlight. Dress your baby in light colored, lightweight clothing that covers the body and a wide brim hat to shade the face, neck and ears.
- ☐ In the event that you cannot keep your baby out of the sun, sunscreen with a SPF of at least 30 may be applied sparingly to small areas such as the face, back and back of hands. Be sure to do patch testing prior to use.

### Children and Teens

- ☐ Avoid the sun between the hours of 10 AM and 4 PM.
- ☐ Wear hats and sunglasses.
- ☐ Apply broad spectrum sunscreen with a SPF of at least 30 at least 30 minutes prior to sun exposure. It takes approximately 1 ounce of sunscreen to fully cover an older child. Reapply frequently, especially if swimming or sweating.

## Bike Safety

- ☐ Purchase a helmet that is approved by the Consumer Product Safety Commission.
- ☐ Helmets should be worn on any bike ride regardless of how short the ride or how close to home the person is.
- ☐ Your child should be taught the “Rules of the Road” before being allowed to ride on the street. These include always wearing a helmet, riding with traffic, stopping and looking both ways before entering the street, stopping at all marked and unmarked intersections, and stopping before turning.
- ☐ Children should never ride their bikes at dusk or in the dark.
- ☐ Be sure to buy your child a bike with a proper fit once you decide your child is ready to ride a 2-wheeler. While sitting on the seat with hands on the handlebar, your child must be able to place the balls of both feet on the ground. Standing and straddling the center bar, your child should be able to stand with both feet flat on the ground with at least 1 inch of clearance between the bar and your child.

## Poison Sumac, Ivy and Oak

The rash due to exposure to poison ivy, oak or sumac is a contact dermatitis. It is the result of a reaction to the urushiol oil found on bruised or broken plant parts. One can develop a sensitivity to this oil at any point in life and reactions can be quite severe. Symptoms generally develop within one to three days of exposure; however lesions may present up to 21 days after exposure in individuals previously unexposed. The fluid within the blisters does not spread the rash. Occasionally, people may spread the resin from clothing or under fingernails, which may expose other household contacts.

Left untreated, the dermatitis usually resolves within one to three weeks. The most common complication is secondary bacterial infection of the skin. The most important treatment is identification and avoidance of the plants. In the event of a known exposure, remove any contaminated clothing and gently wash the skin with mild soap and water as soon as possible, ideally within 10 minutes of exposure.



## Poison Sumac, Ivy and Oak (continued)

Once dermatitis has developed, symptomatic relief can be attempted (see below).

- ☐ Learn to recognize poison sumac, ivy and oak.
- ☐ The rash can develop as early as 4 hours after exposure or as late as 21 days later for newly sensitized individuals. It may appear at different points in time due to the degree of exposure, but the fluid from blisters is not “contagious.”
- ☐ The most important “treatment” is prevention and avoidance. In the event of a known exposure, remove any contaminated clothing and gently wash the skin with mild soap and water as soon as possible.
- ☐ Once the rash has developed, symptomatic relief includes topical therapy such as oatmeal baths, cool, wet compresses, calamine lotion, Burrow’s solution or Domeboro for weeping blisters. Oral antihistamines, such as Benadryl or Zyrtec, may provide some relief from itching. Over the counter 1% Hydrocortisone cream used sparingly twice daily will decrease the swelling and itchiness.
- ☐ For severe or extensive rashes contact the office for an appointment.
- ☐ In general, the rash will resolve within one to three weeks after presentation. Do not break the blisters as this may predispose your child to a secondary bacterial infection of the skin.

## Ticks and Tick Removal

With spring and summer comes more outdoor play and likely the discovery of ticks in your home or on your children. There are many species of ticks, only one of which, the deer tick (*Ixodes Scapularis*), is known to transmit the bacteria that causes Lyme disease. Following a tick bite you should look for the clinical signs suggestive of Lyme disease listed below. Symptoms usually occur within 3 – 30 days (with an average of 10 days) after a tick bite, however most people do not recall the bite because the ticks are small and the bite is usually not itchy or painful. A tick needs to be attached for a minimum of 24 hours in order to transmit Lyme disease, therefore checking your child daily will help prevent infection. It is not necessary to treat tick bites with antibiotics, just observe your child for symptoms of Lyme Disease.

It is important and appropriate for caregivers to remove ticks from a child when they are discovered. Instructions to remove a tick from your child:

Using tweezers, grasp the tick at its head or mouth next to your child’s skin. Hold the tick perpendicular to the skin and pull firmly and steadily away from the skin. Swab the bite site with rubbing alcohol. Place the tick in a sealed container. Do not use petroleum jelly (Vaseline) or a hot match to attempt to remove the tick. Do not worry if you are unable to remove the entire tick. The remaining parts will dislodge themselves within a few days after the body of the tick has been removed. You may take the tick to your town’s Department of Health for identification and determination if the tick could transmit the bacteria that cause Lyme disease. In the event that the health department determines that the tick you submitted was carrying *Borrelia burgdorferi*, you can watch for clinical signs suggestive of Lyme disease.

Lyme disease symptoms:

- ☐ A large circular red rash surrounding the bite site (most common finding).
- ☐ Muscle and joint aches.
- ☐ Arthritis (inflammation and pain in a joint).
- ☐ Facial paralysis, usually seen as drooping on one side of the face.
- ☐ Severe headache.
- ☐ Fatigue/Chills/Fever

