

Lazy, hazy

DAYS OF SUMMER

6 common risks—and how you can avoid them

The air is warm, the pool water is cool, and the days linger like an old friend. What's not to love about summer? Unfortunately, as the temperatures start to climb, so do the number of injuries.

"As soon as the first lawn mowers start up, we brace ourselves for the summer trauma season," says emergency medicine physician Marni Teramana, DO, who practices at Kettering and Sycamore medical centers. "In the summer months we see an increase in Emergency Department visits."

The good news is, most of these visits can be avoided. We've rounded up six of the most common reasons for summertime emergency visits and share how you can prevent them.

1 SUNBURNS

Sunburn, the most common type of burn in the summer months, occurs when your skin is unprotected and exposed to the sun for extended periods of time. Sunburn can result in reddened skin, pain, dehydration, fever, and even diarrhea.

Children 6 months and older, along with adults, should use sunscreen with an SPF of 30, and reapply it every two hours. Infants under 6 months of age should never be exposed directly to the sun. Avoid the sun during peak daytime hours, and wear protective gear like hats, sunglasses, and appropriate clothing to shield yourself from harmful rays.

2 HEAT CRAMPS, EXHAUSTION, AND STROKE

These three heat-related conditions are caused when the body overheats and is unable to cool itself down.



Symptoms to watch for include excessive thirst, heavy sweating, rapid pulse, cool skin with goosebumps while in the heat, muscle cramps, dizziness, nausea, headache, and the inability to think clearly. If you begin to experience any of these symptoms, stop activity and move to a cooler place to rest. Drink cool water and sports drinks to rehydrate. If your symptoms worsen, seek medical attention immediately.

3 DANGERS OF THE GREAT OUTDOORS

No, we're not talking about bears. Other elements that you might run into while hiking or camping—like mosquitos; spiders; ticks; poison oak, ivy, and sumac; and splinters—can put a real damper on your day. Be prepared with bug sprays and long clothing, and keep an eye out where you're walking.

4 LAWN MOWER ACCIDENTS

The American Academy of Pediatrics estimates 17,000 children are hurt by lawn mowers annually, and the Consumer Product Safety Commission reports more than 80,000 Emergency Department visits because of lawn mower injuries each year. To prevent injuries, clear your yard of sticks and rocks before mowing, wear long pants and hard-toed shoes, and keep children and pets inside while you are mowing.

It's also important to make sure you're healthy enough for the chore, especially if you're using a push-mower. "Mowing can be a strenuous activity," Dr. Teramana says. "Be aware of your body's limitations, and don't over-exert yourself, especially in high humidity and elevated temperatures. This can put a dangerous strain on your heart and lead to heart attacks. Keep yourself hydrated, and take frequent breaks."

5 SWIMMING INJURIES

Every day, two to three children die as a result of an accidental drowning, which can occur in a matter of seconds. Teaching children how to swim is important, and swim lessons are a great summer activity. Children should also wear age-appropriate, U.S. Coast Guard-approved floatation devices.

▼ STAY SAFE

Attend our Public Safety Fair to learn more ways to keep your family safe this summer.

Register online at ketteringhealth.org/emergency

Enforce a no-running rule around the pool to prevent falls, and designate an adult to be watching children at all times. Educate your family to not dive headfirst into bodies of water. An alarming number of spinal cord injuries occur from diving into too shallow water. Finally, knowing CPR can save lives. Sign up for a certification class.



6 FOOD POISONING

Cookouts and block parties are some of the fondest memories we all have of summer. Unfortunately, they are also a prime spot to pick up a foodborne illness. High temperatures mixed with food left out of refrigeration are a dangerous combination. Keep foods on ice or refrigerated, and be especially aware of products containing mayonnaise, eggs, milk, poultry, seafood, and meat.

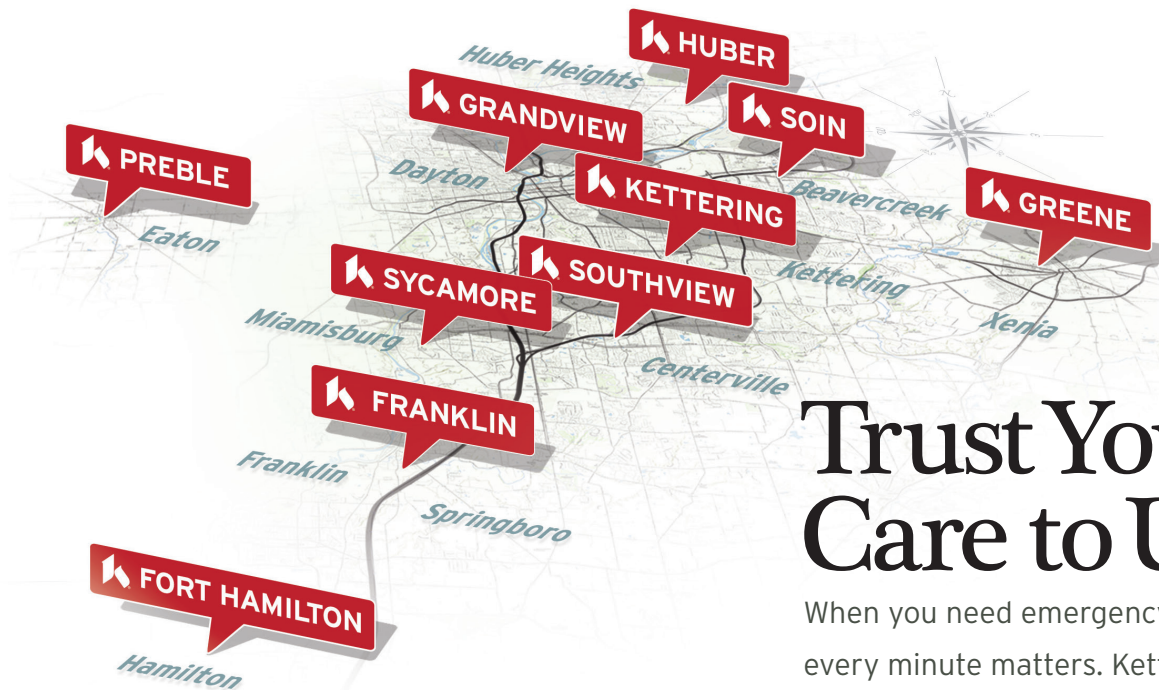


Summer safety kit

Whether you're spending the day at home or hitting the road, you can be prepared for unanticipated emergencies by having supplies ready.

Use this checklist to build your own summer safety kit.

- ☐ Instant ice packs
- ☐ Bug spray with DEET or picaridin
- ☐ Aloe vera gel
- ☐ First aid thermometer
- ☐ Cellphone and cellphone charger
- ☐ Allergy and asthma medications, if needed
- ☐ Small doses of over-the-counter medicines, like Pepto Bismol and Tylenol
- ☐ Saline solution
- ☐ Baby wipes
- ☐ Child ID methods, like wristlets or shoe tags that have ID info and allergies (for days at amusement parks, day camps, or birthday parties)
- ☐ Water and sports drinks (restock regularly)
- ☐ Healthy snack items
 - Non-perishable snacks: trail mix, granola bars
 - Perishable snacks for day trips: fresh fruit, cheese sticks
- ☐ Sunscreen/lip balm, SPF 30+
- ☐ Hand sanitizer
- ☐ Antiseptic wipes
- ☐ Cotton balls, bandages, gauze, and adhesive tape
- ☐ Antibacterial cream
- ☐ Tweezers (for removing splinters and ticks)
- ☐ Plastic gloves and baggies
- ☐ Hydrocortisone cream



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