



Five Simple Summer Safety Tips from the MommyDocs

- **Have a Sun Protection Strategy:** The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends sunscreen with a minimum Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 15. Look for products that provide "broad spectrum" coverage to protect against both UVA and UVB rays. Use this sunscreen routine with your child--daily application 30 minutes before going outside and reapplication every 2 hours (or sooner if swimming, toweling off, or sweating). Creating a routine will establish good habits for the future. In addition, don't forget a wide brim hat, sunglasses with 99-100% UVA/UVB protection, and sun protective clothing.
- **Keep Pests off Your Little One:** In the summer, many insects can bite or sting your child. For pesky mosquitoes and ticks, consider a DEET containing insect repellent. Apply sparingly to exposed skin (avoid backs of hands and around the eyes and mouth) and/or to clothing once a day. As the percentage of DEET goes up, the duration of action increases. To prevent unnecessary exposure, always use the lowest percentage that will last for the planned length of time spent outdoors. Never go above 30% or use on children under 2 months old.
- **Keep the Pool Cool *and* Clean:** Small yard pools provide a great way for kids to have fun and cool down when the temperature rises, but they can also harbor germs, such as bacteria. To keep the pool free from unwanted "swimmers," after each use disinfect it with bleach by cleaning with a solution of $\frac{3}{4}$ cup regular bleach to one gallon of water, then rinse well and dry thoroughly. Safety must: Always supervise children regardless of age when they are around any water; whether it's a bucket, a small backyard plastic pool, or the local community pool.
- **High Heat Means Hydrate:** Excessive heat exposure may cause your child to experience a heat-related illness such as heat cramps, heat exhaustion, or even heat stroke. How to prevent this: take breaks in the shade, avoid playing outside during peak sun exposure hours, and drink, drink, drink! Make sure your child is taking in plenty of fluids *before* he become thirsty.
- **Rid Rashes and Relieve Itchies:** Running through the yard in bare feet, taking a nature walk on a trail, and picnicing in the park are some of the joys of warmer weather. But all of this outdoor activity can expose your child to a host of plants including those which cause poison ivy, poison oak or poison sumac. If an allergic reaction occurs, ask the pediatrician about an oral antihistamine and/or a topical skin care product such as a steroid cream or calamine. If the rash is extensive, looks infected, or is not getting better, call your doctor right away.