



Public Health
Division

County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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Press Release

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Summer Safety Keep You and Your Family Safe and Healthy

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY, CA. Summer is a great time to enjoy different indoor and outdoor activities. But every summer, children in our community die or are injured from drowning. For adults and children alike, additional risks include heat-related illnesses, diseases from bug bites, and injuries from falls.

Drowning is a leading cause of unintentional death in children ages 1 to 4, and the fifth leading cause of unintentional injury death for people of all ages. Between 2012 – 2016 Santa Cruz County had 43 drowning related deaths.

“We just want people to be safe and healthy,” said Dr. Arnold S. Leff, Health Officer, Santa Cruz County. “A drowning death is devastating. Even when a person survives a near drowning, there may be serious injury. These injuries can result in serious neurological damage and significant lifelong health consequences.”

Whether you pull an unconscious person from the water or see someone suddenly keel over and become unresponsive, calling 911 should be your first action, if you are able to do so without leaving the scene. Otherwise, send someone else, and concentrate on the victim by performing mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Knowing how to safely perform mouth-to-mouth resuscitation is important for anyone spending time in and around water.

For those situations when a person does not have a pulse, Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) can help provide victims the extra time needed to survive until an emergency vehicle arrives.

“Hands-only CPR is for people who see a teen or adult suddenly collapse. It could be at home, at work or in a park. Calling 911 should be your first action, as the dispatcher can also provide instruction on Hands-only CPR,” commented Brenda Brenner, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Administrator, Santa Cruz County EMS Program. “As a bystander, don’t be afraid. Immediate CPR can double or even triple a person’s chance of survival.”

To avoid summer injuries and illness, following simple Summer Safety Tips can make this time of year memorable for summer fun and not for a trip to the hospital.

See page 2 for Summer Safety Tips and these links for more information. #summersafety

Drowning Prevention: CDC at www.cdc.gov/safechild/drowning

CPR & First Aid: American Heart Association at www.cpr.heart.org

Fall Prevention: National Council on Aging at www.ncoa.org/healthy-aging/falls-prevention

Extreme Heat: CDC at www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat

Mosquito Bites: CDC at www.cdc.gov/features/stopmosquitoes

Preventing Tick Bites: CDC at www.cdc.gov/lyme/prev

Summer Safety Tips

Water Safety

For children ages 1 to 4 years, swimming pools pose the greatest risk. It is important to make safety a priority in and around the water.

- Actively supervise children in or near water.
- Make sure your family knows how to swim.
- Secure pools with appropriate barriers, covers, and alarms.
- Know how to perform CPR – on adults and children.

Beat the Heat

Whether you are working or playing outside in the summer, if you are not use to the heat, or if the weather is hot, you can be at risk for a heat-related illness. Take steps to protect yourself:

- Never ever leave kids or pets unattended in a car or other vehicle, even if the windows are cracked open
- Wear loose, lightweight and light-colored clothing.
- Take frequent water breaks.
- Apply sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15.
- Stay cool with cool showers or baths.

Stop Bug Bites and Disease

Protect yourself and your family by preventing bites and diseases, like West Nile virus, which can be transmitted by insects.

- When outdoors, use an effective insect repellent containing active ingredients with EPA approval as repellents for the skin or clothes.
- Check yourself and your children for ticks. No need to panic if you find one. There are several tick removal devices on the market, but a plain set of fine-tipped tweezers will remove a tick effectively.

Prevent Injuries

Each year emergency departments treat adults and children for falls at home and on the playground. Did you know that one in three older Americans falls every year? Falls are the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries for people aged 65+.

- Discuss with your healthcare provider your risk for falls and programs and services that can help, especially if you are over 65 years of age.
- Check to make sure that the surfaces under playground equipment are safe, soft, and well-maintained.
- Supervise young children at all times around fall hazards, such as stairs, playground equipment, and even upstairs windows.
- Use stair gates, which can help keep a busy, active child from taking a dangerous tumble

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Santa Cruz County