

GET WELL & Stay Well

A Publication of the UMMC Patient Resource Center Summer 2006

Welcome to Summer

Summer is here, and with it, come longer days, warmer weather, and outdoor activities. Summer is also host to a variety of important health topics, which we feature in this issue of **GET WELL & Stay Well**.

Summer fun for children and adults includes lots of time outdoors and in pools, and you will find summer sun safety tips for the entire family in our feature article. Another article addresses potential summer poison concerns like sunscreen and lighter fluid exposures and animal bites.

For the second year, the Patient Resource Center participated in its community fitness program, **GET FIT MD2™**, with an overwhelming response. Over 3,500 people signed up for a three month walking program complete with pedometers to measure their progress. Find out how the program got started, and track its progress in our article. The Patient Resource Center also completed a year-long grant from the Baltimore City Health Department, which provided tobacco prevention education to pre-kindergartners in public and private city preschools. We continue to look for new ways to meet the community's needs through education, health screenings, and information.

Please look at our course schedule and read our informative articles, and learn how to better care for yourself and others. Our vision is to help people—GET WELL and Stay Well.

Stay Healthy,
Anne D. Williams, RN, MS
Editor

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Summer Sun Safety



Summer is a time for outdoor fun for everyone. But, do you know how to protect yourself and your family from serious skin damage from overexposure to the sun? The majority of skin cancers are preventable by routinely protecting your skin from the sun's damaging ultraviolet (UV) rays. In fact, there is increasing evidence that excessive sun exposure, and particularly sunburns experienced prior to 15 years of age, are a major risk

factor for skin cancer later in life. Most Americans are not doing enough to protect themselves. It's about more than keeping your family sunburn-free!

Slip, slop, slap, and wrap! This motto, which was launched in 1981 in Australia, was part of a health campaign to help the Australian population know how to protect themselves from sun damage. The motto caught on around the globe and now American children learn this slogan today too. What exactly does it mean, other than the obvious?

Slip—Slip on a shirt; **Slop**—Slop on sunscreen; **Slap**—Slap on a hat; **Wrap**—Wrap on sunglasses.

SLIP ON A SHIRT

Some people think about protection from the sun at the beach or pool, but exposure adds up day after day. Washing your car, gardening, playing outside, or walking the dog all adds up over time to give you sun damage. Slip on a close-weave shirt or one with added UV protection. It's important to remember that when clothing gets wet, it stretches and allows more UV rays through. The protection from a t-shirt is usually cut in half when it becomes wet. Also, remember to try to avoid the sun's most intense rays during 10 am – 4 pm. During this time, the UV rays are the strongest and can do the most damage.

SLOP ON SUNSCREEN

Choose and use a broad-spectrum (protection against UVA and UVB rays) sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 15 or higher. Once you've bought a product, use it regularly before sun exposure. Ideally, you should apply it 15-30 minutes before you go out because it takes a while to sink in and become fully effective. Sunscreen should go on clean, dry skin before make-up or moisturizers are used. Apply a generous amount to all exposed skin and reapply every couple hours, especially

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SUMMER FUN SAFETY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

after swimming and excessive sweating. Sunscreen now is usually marked with an expiration date. Sunscreen without an expiration date has a shelf life of no more than three years. So when in doubt, throw it out! Don't forget your lips too. Choose and use a lip moisturizer or balm with SPF 15 as well. And, remember that African Americans should follow these rules as well.

SLAP ON A HAT

Sunscreen and shirts aren't the only protection that should be used in the sun. Hats play a big role in protecting your face, neck, eyes, and scalp. Hats have been shown to reduce the UV radiation by over 50 percent, so they are definitely worthwhile. Look for a wide-brimmed hat, because it offers the most protection.

WRAP ON SUNGLASSES

Wearing sunglasses is an easy way to protect your eyes and the sensitive skin surrounding them. The type of sunglasses that work the best are the wrap-around type because they cover more areas of exposure around the sides of the glasses. Using sunglasses can protect your eyes from UV rays and reduce your risk of cataracts.

KIDS IN THE SUN

Children are especially vulnerable to damage from the sun as their young skin is more sensitive and delicate than adult skin. Young skin can burn in as little as 10 minutes. With all the time that children are outside playing at home and school, their sun exposure adds up. In fact, 80 percent of a person's sun exposure occurs during their childhood and teen age years. Practice and regularly use the Slip, Slop, Slap, and Wrap routine with your children to get them into an early routine of sunscreen and smart sun-sense. If your child doesn't like a particular sunscreen product, experiment with different types—lotion, spray, solid stick, fun colors, etc. When you find one that your child likes, they will be more likely to cooperate and use it regularly. Good habits begin early, so start now to protect them for a lifetime.

All of these tips can help protect you and your family from sunburns and exposure to the sun's harmful rays. Summer is a time for fun, relaxation, and recreation. You can still have "fun in the sun," just use some sun-sense and remember to Slip, Slop, Slap, and Wrap! For more information, log onto www.cdc.gov/chooseyourcover/qanda.htm.

The UV Index and What It Means to You

THE UV INDEX

Developed in partnership with the National Weather Service, the UV Index provides a daily forecast of the expected risk of overexposure to the sun. The Index predicts UV intensity levels on a scale of 0 to 10+, where 0 indicates a minimal risk of overexposure, and 10+ means a very high risk.

UV Index Number	Exposure Level
0 to 2	Minimal
3 to 4	Low
5 to 6	Moderate
7 to 9	High
10+	Very high

ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE

- **When the UV Index is "high" or "very high".** Limit outdoor activities between 10 am and 4 pm, when the sun is most intense.
- **Seek shade.** When possible, conduct activities in a shaded area. Rotate players to allow breaks in the shade.
- **Apply sunscreen.** Twenty minutes before going outside, liberally apply a broad-spectrum sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 15. Reapply every two hours or after swimming or sweating.
- **Require hats and sunglasses.** Encourage kids to find a hat they like and wear it. Wide brim hats offer the most sun protection. Teach kids to wear sunglasses with 99 to 100 percent UV-A and UV-B protection.
- **Encourage t-shirts instead of tank tops.**

(From EPA's website – www.epa.gov/sunwise)

To find the UV Index, visit EPA's UV Index Web Page – www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html

Search by zip code for your local UV Index. View a daily UV Index color-coded map of the United States or a daily Index map of 58 specific monitoring locations. Check local newspapers or listen to local radio and TV weather forecasts.

Get Fit Maryland2™ Keeps In Step



How many steps do you have today? Since April 1, employees, staff, and the public have been walking more than ever and have started counting their steps everyday. The Medical Center (UMMC) joined once again this year with the School of Medicine and Merritt Athletic Clubs and launched **Get Fit Maryland2™**. The 12-week program is aimed at preventing obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease one step at a time, so to speak.

For its second year, the program has

been a huge success with over 3,500 people registered. Entire offices are challenging each other to reach the daily goal of 10,000 steps, and some even have friendly competitions going as well. Mariellen Synan, Community Outreach Manager, reports that several local businesses and churches have also joined in the walking program. "The program has been very successful and recently received the Community Outreach award from the *Daily Record's* 2006 Health Care Heroes awards," states Synan.

Many individuals have benefited from the **Get Fit** program. Ray Scott of Facilities/Engineering likes the **Get Fit** program because "it holds me accountable for walking. Now I can easily tell how much I walk daily because I've used a pedometer regularly. The activity has increased my metabolism and helped me maintain a healthy weight."

Warm Weather Activities Harbor Hidden Threats to the Whole Family

ANGEL BIVENS, R.Ph., MBA, CSPI
EDUCATION COORDINATOR, MARYLAND POISON CENTER

Those lazy days of summer are here. The kids have finished school. Summer activities are in full swing. Are we prepared for the summer poison hazards that await us?

The Maryland Poison Center, located at the University of Maryland School of Pharmacy in Baltimore, is always ready to answer calls about unintentional and intentional exposures to the things in our environment, including household products, medications, plants, and critters. In fact, the Maryland Poison Center answered approximately 68,000 calls in 2005. Of these, approximately 35,000 were human exposures (information calls and animals calls accounted for the balance). And over 18,000 of the exposures were in children who were five years old and under. The Maryland Poison Center would like to help keep your family safe from the summertime hazards that are waiting for them.

If you suspect an unintentional poisoning has occurred, call 1-800-222-1222 immediately.

Exposures to sunscreen, glowsticks and swimming pool chemicals are common calls to the Maryland Poison Center during the summer months. Sunscreen in the eyes is very irritating, but will not result in long-term damage if the eyes are irrigated properly at the time of the exposure. Glowsticks often break and the liquid gets in a child's mouth, on their skin or in their eyes. Serious effects are not common with glowstick exposures. However, swimming pool chemicals are very irritating when inhaled. Call the Maryland Poison Center for instructions on handling all of these common exposures.

Family cookouts and picnics are a popular summertime activity. Both charcoal and gas grills have hidden dangers associated with their use. Lighter fluid used with charcoal grills can cause significant irritation when it comes in contact with the skin or eyes or is inhaled. Ingestions of lighter fluid are alarming because some of the product can get into the lungs if the person gasps or gags while swallowing. All exposures to lighter fluid should be reported to the Maryland Poison Center

immediately. It is very important not to induce vomiting if lighter fluid is swallowed. Gas grills should only be used outdoors because there is the potential risk of carbon monoxide exposure associated with their use indoors.

Plants pose another summertime hazard. Berries on bushes and trees are attractive to little ones. Children may think these berries look like the ones they had for dessert, but they may be poisonous. Mushrooms can also be attractive to children. The most severe poisoning cases involving mushrooms are in adults who think they know what mushrooms are safe and make a meal of their find. Chemical testing is the only safe way to identify whether a mushroom is safe to eat. Stick with the mushrooms in the grocery stores.

Critters are out there sharing the great outdoors with us. Questions about bee, wasp and hornet stings, snake bites, tick bites, and jelly fish stings can be answered by calling the Maryland Poison Center. Most of these calls can be managed at home. There are two venomous snakes in Maryland, the Timber Rattle Snake and the Northern Copperhead, which can result in serious consequences. Tick bites in Maryland can result in Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever and Lyme Disease. Call the Poison Center immediately for management of either snake and tick bites.

Vacation homes and hotel rooms should be poison-proofed as much as possible. This is a little more challenging because storage space is more limited. If the hotel room does not have a lockable cabinet, lock medicines and personal care products in a suitcase. Keep the nationwide telephone number (1-800-222-1222) with you. Calling this number from anywhere in the United States will connect you directly to the Poison Center nearest to where you are.

The Maryland Poison Center wishes a safe summer to all. Remember, help from the poison experts is only a phone call away! If you suspect an unintentional poisoning has occurred, call 1-800-222-1222 immediately. Do not wait for symptoms. Information about potential poison hazards is also available by calling the same number. If you would like to receive more information on keeping your family poisonsafe, call 410-706-8122 to get a copy of our educational brochure and Mr. Yuk stickers.



Vikky Bates of UMMC's Corporate Contracts is very thankful for the program. "If it were not for the **Get Fit Maryland** program, I may not have known that I had high blood pressure. I was unaware that I had high blood pressure until I had it taken during the **Get Fit** registration. I felt fine, but now take blood pressure medicine, exercise, and eat sensibly. I am very happy that I signed up for **Get Fit Maryland**. The program has made a wonderful difference in my life. Thank you!!!"

People who registered for the program received a pedometer to count their steps along with monthly log books to record their steps. Each month, participants turn in their log books and receive an incentive to keep walking. To encourage families to participate this year, a children's version of the log book with kid-friendly incentives was offered, according to Anne Williams, RN, MS, Manager of

the Patient Resource Center. "We hope to provide an even more comprehensive program for school children in the near future to encourage healthy lifestyles early in life," according to Williams.

Plans are already underway to expand the program next spring based on the success and interest this year. "We hope that all Marylanders will take the opportunity to '**Get Fit**' next year and reduce their risk for obesity, diabetes, and heart disease," says Kari Bichell, MD, MPH, Medical Director for the **Get Fit Maryland2** Program.

For more information on **Get Fit Maryland2**, you can contact the Patient Resource Center at 410-328-9355 or on the web at www.getfitmaryland.org.

July/August/September 2006 Calendar

To register for classes (except for Stork's Nest, Childbirth and Infant Care), please contact the Patient Resource Center at 410-328-WELL (9355). All sessions are free unless noted.

Classes

Stork's Nest - Prenatal Education

July 7, 14, 21, 28

Aug 4, 11, 18, 25

Sept 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

All classes run from 10:30 am -12:30 pm every Friday.

Please contact Stork's Nest at 410-328-2944 for information and registration.

Childbirth Education, Infant CPR, and Infant Care

Please contact the Childbirth Education office at 410-328-2944 for class information and registration.

Yoga (Prana)

Mondays, 6 – 7:00 pm

Weekly—ongoing. Returning in August!

Cost: \$10 for employees weekly or \$100 for 10 weeks

\$12 for public weekly or \$120 for 10 weeks

\$15 for walk-ins (walk-ins are welcome), \$25 reimbursement for benefit-eligible employees

The Solution® Method Training

Tuesdays, 6 – 8:00 pm

12 week group—ongoing. Provides support and training in the skills of self-nurturing and effective limits, which turn off the drive to go to excess with food, working, spending, etc.

Cost: \$399. \$25 reimbursement for benefit-eligible employees.

Smoking Cessation – American Lung Association's Freedom from Smoking®

8 weeks, Tuesdays, 12 noon – 1 pm beginning soon

Call 410-328-9355 for registration and information.

You don't have to quit the first day!

Cost: Free (includes ALA educational packet).

Food SafetyIt's in Your Hands

Mondays, 10 am

9 Gudelsky Conference Room near the BMT unit entrance.

For any Cancer Center patients, families, or caregivers.

Contact Hadas at 410-328-5462 to register.

Support Groups

Transplant Support Group—Education Series

Off for summer—will resume in September

3rd Tuesday each month from 5 – 6:30 pm

UMMC Patient Resource Center and Learning Centers

Leukemia and Lymphoma Support Group

4th Tuesday each month at 3:30 pm

Free to all adults/families with Leukemia, Hodgkins or

non-Hodgkins Lymphoma, or Myeloma. Call Tracy Orwig

at 410-825-2500 or Beth Wintermute at 410-328-3595 to

register or for more information.

UMMC Patient Resource Center

Bariatric Support Group

2nd Wednesday each month from 6 – 8 pm

Free to adults in the Bariatric bypass surgery program.

Call Nadja Muchow at 410-328-8936 for more information.

Breast Cancer Support Group

4th Thursday each month at 12 noon

Free to all women with breast cancer. Call Stacey Stephens at

410-328-4673 for more information.

Events

Red Cross Blood Drive

July 7, 9 am – 3 pm

UMMC Learning Center – Call 1-800-492-5538 to schedule your appointment.

Church Without Walls Community Health Fair

July 8, 11 am- 3 pm

Lafayette Square

UMMC is a sponsor of this annual community event that offers free health screenings, food, and fun.

Child Safety Seat Check

September 22

1 – 4:00 pm

Mt. Washington Pediatric Hospital

For more information call 410-328-7532.

Free Mammograms and Pap Tests

To women over 40 years living in Baltimore City.

Offered by the Baltimore City Cancer Program at

UMMC Cancer Center. Call 410-328-HOPE (4673).