



Health & Wellness Ministry

Summer is here, school is finally out...praise Jesus we survived the month of May! Parents am I right or am I right?!? Since we have officially welcomed the outdoor season with all its glorious greenness, flowers, and amazing outdoor activities, we thought it would be good, to start off our “**Summer Safety**” series with something that concerns our biggest organ. No, it is not your brain, yes we know you are smart, but did you know that your skin is actually your body’s largest organ?!? Wait...what??? Yes!!! Your skin is your body’s largest organ! So, in order to help you keep that vital organ as safe as possible this season, the Health and Wellness Ministry is at your service to give you some tips of the trade in regards to - **SUN SAFETY, MOSQUITOS, AND TICKS** (oh my).

SUN SAFETY

(...because ain’t nobody got time for Skin Cancer)

Use a Layered Approach for Sun Protection.

- Seek shade, especially late morning through mid-afternoon.
- Wear a hat, sunglasses and other clothes to protect skin.
- Use broad spectrum sunscreen with SPF 15+ to protect any exposed skin.
- Sunscreen works best when used with shade or clothes, and it **must be re-applied every two hours AND after swimming, sweating, and toweling off.**

More Fun Sunscreen Facts:

How sunscreen works. Most sunscreen products work by absorbing, reflecting, or scattering sunlight. They contain chemicals that interact with the skin to protect it from UV rays.

SPF. Sunscreens are assigned a sun protection factor (SPF) number that rates their effectiveness in blocking UV rays. Higher numbers indicate more protection.

Apply sunscreen approximately 30 minutes before being in the sun (for best results) so that it can be absorbed by the skin and less likely to wash off when you perspire. Do this even on slightly cloudy or cool days. Don’t forget to put a thick layer on all parts of exposed skin (don’t forget those ears). Get help for hard-to-reach places like your back. If you use a lotion type sunscreen, shake well before use to mix particles that might be clumped up in the container.

Expiration date. Check the sunscreen’s expiration date. Sunscreen without an expiration date has a shelf life of no more than three years, but its shelf life is shorter if it has been exposed to high temperatures.

Be aware that **more expensive** does not mean better. Although a costly brand might feel or smell better, it is not necessarily more effective than a cheaper product. Check Consumer Reports and the FDA for the latest updates on top rated sunscreens for 2018. You might be surprised that Equate and Target brands usually make the list!!

Mosquitos

(...because ain't nobody got time for Zika virus)

Use Insect Repellent:

Use [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-registered insect repellents](#) with one of the active ingredients below. When used as directed, EPA-registered insect repellents are proven safe and effective, even for pregnant and breastfeeding women.

- DEET
- Picaridin (known as KBR 3023 and icaridin outside the US)
- IR3535
- Oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) or para-menthane-diol (PMD)
- 2-undecanone
- Find the insect repellent that's right for you by using [EPA's search tool](#).

Tips for Everyone:

- Always follow the product label instructions.
- Reapply insect repellent as directed.
 - Do not spray repellent on the skin under clothing.
 - If you are also using sunscreen, apply sunscreen first and insect repellent second.

Tips for Babies & Children

- Always follow instructions when applying insect repellent to children.
- Do not use insect repellent on babies younger than 2 months old.
- Do not apply insect repellent onto a child's hands, eyes, mouth, and cut or irritated skin.
 - Adults: Spray insect repellent onto your hands and then apply to a child's face.
- Do not use products containing oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE) or para-menthane-diol (PMD) on children under 3 years old.

Natural insect repellents (repellents not registered with EPA)

- We do not know the effectiveness of non-EPA registered insect repellents, including some natural repellents.
- To protect yourself against diseases spread by mosquitoes, CDC and EPA recommend using an EPA-registered insect repellent.

Protect your baby or child

- Dress your child in clothing that covers arms and legs.
- Cover crib, stroller, and baby carrier with mosquito netting.

Take steps to control mosquitoes inside and outside your home

- Use screens on windows and doors. Repair holes in screens to keep mosquitoes outside.
- Use air conditioning when available.
 - Sleep under a mosquito bed net if air conditioned or screened rooms are not available or if sleeping outdoors.
- Once a week, empty and scrub, turn over, cover, or throw out items that hold water, such as tires, buckets, planters, toys, pools, birdbaths, flowerpots, or trash containers. Check inside and outside your home. Mosquitoes lay eggs near water.

Ticks

(...because ain't nobody got time for Lyme disease)

Tick exposure can occur year-round, but ticks are most active during warmer months (April-September). Know [which ticks are most common in your area](#).

Before You Go Outdoors

- **Know where to expect ticks.** Ticks live in grassy, brushy, or wooded areas, or even on animals. Spending time outside walking your dog, camping, gardening, or hunting could bring you in close contact with ticks. Many people get ticks in their own yard or neighborhood.
- **Treat clothing and gear** with products containing 0.5% permethrin. Permethrin can be used to treat boots, clothing and camping gear and remain protective through several washings.
- **Use [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-registered insect repellents](#)** containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535, Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus (OLE), para-menthane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone. EPA's helpful [search tool](#) can help you find the product that best suits your needs. Always follow product instructions.
 - Do not use insect repellent on babies younger than 2 months old.
 - Do not use products containing OLE or PMD on children under 3 years old.

Avoid Contact with Ticks

- Avoid wooded and brushy areas with high grass and leaf litter.
- Walk in the center of trails.

After You Come Indoors

Check your clothing for ticks. Ticks may be carried into the house on clothing. Any ticks that are found should be removed. Tumble dry clothes in a dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks on dry clothing after you come indoors. If the clothes are damp, additional time may be needed. If the clothes require washing first, hot water is recommended. Cold and medium temperature water will not kill ticks.

Shower soon after being outdoors. Showering within two hours of coming indoors has been shown to reduce your risk of getting Lyme disease and may be effective in reducing the risk of other tickborne diseases. Showering may help wash off unattached ticks and it is a good opportunity to do a tick check.

Check your body for ticks after being outdoors. Conduct a full body check upon return from potentially tick-infested areas, including your own backyard. Use a hand-held or full-length mirror to view all parts of your body. Check these parts of your body and your child's body for ticks:

- Under the arms
- In and around the ears
- Inside belly button
- Back of the knees
- In and around the hair
- Between the legs
- Around the waist

If you find a tick attached to your skin, there's no need to panic—the key is to remove the tick as soon as possible. There are several tick removal devices on the market, but a plain set of fine-tipped tweezers work very well.

How to remove a tick

1. Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.
2. Pull upward with steady, even pressure. Don't twist or jerk the tick; this can cause the mouth-parts to break off and remain in the skin. If this happens, remove the mouth-parts with tweezers. If you are unable to remove the mouth easily with clean tweezers, leave it alone and let the skin heal.
3. After removing the tick, thoroughly clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol or soap and water.
4. Never crush a tick with your fingers. Dispose of a live tick by putting it in alcohol, placing it in a sealed bag/container, wrapping it tightly in tape, or flushing it down the toilet.



Avoid folklore remedies such as “painting” the tick with nail polish or petroleum jelly, or using heat to make the tick detach from the skin. Your goal is to remove the tick as quickly as possible—not waiting for it to detach.

Follow-up

If you develop a rash or fever within several weeks of removing a tick, see your doctor. Be sure to tell the doctor about your recent tick bite, when the bite occurred, and where you most likely acquired the tick.

Now that we have officially made you paranoid this summer....get out there and start having fun...while keeping your largest organ safe this season!!

Blessings,

St. David's Health and Wellness Ministry

