

Ten Tips for a Heart-Healthy Summer

The summer can bring many happy memories – family vacations, summer camp, trips to the ocean, picnics and enjoying the sunset or bonfire. No matter what your summer traditions include, be sure to keep your health at the top of your summer list.

Here are the American Heart Association and American Stroke Association's top 10 tips for a heart-healthy summer:

1. **Learn Hands-Only CPR.** Days by the pool and ocean can be fun, but always be prepared for emergencies. Hands-Only CPR has only two steps: If you see a teen or adult suddenly collapse, 1) Call 9-1-1, and 2) Press hard and fast in the center of the chest. View the AHA's one-minute video at www.heart.org/handsonlycpr or sign up for a CPR course at www.cpr.heart.org.
2. **Stay hydrated.** Drink plenty of fluids (preferably water) throughout the day and before, during and after working out to maintain salt-water balance. Avoid caffeine and alcoholic beverages.
3. **Exercise smarter, not harder.** Plan your workout for the cooler parts of the day – either early morning or early evening when the sun's heat is at its least. If you must exercise during the hottest part of the day or in high humidity, decrease exercise intensity and duration. And remember, you can get a great workout indoors by going to a gym or walking at the mall. Choose lightweight, light-colored and breathable fabrics.
4. **Dress the part.** Wear minimal amounts of clothing that allow for quick evaporation of sweat. Choose lightweight, light-colored and breathable fabrics, such as cotton.
5. **Can't get to the Mediterranean? Eat like you're there!** Choose fresh fruits, veggies, small amounts of lean meat or fish to grill or sauté. Load up skewers with mushrooms, peppers, cherry tomatoes and zucchini, then spray lightly with olive oil cooking spray and grill until lightly browned. Grilled fruit is a quick and light dessert.
6. **Pack to play.** When taking a family road trip, plan to incorporate regular physical activity into your daily routine. Pack a football, soccer ball, Frisbee or paddle ball so that you can be physically active while away.
7. **Enjoy fruit pops.** Homemade freezer pops are an easy, fun treat for kids to make and enjoy. Mash up fruit like peaches, grapes, berries or watermelon and put into paper cups, insert a Popsicle stick through a plastic wrap cover, and freeze overnight.

8. **Protect yourself from the sun.** Wear wide-brimmed hats, light, long-sleeve shirt cover-ups, and always apply water-resistant sunscreen with at least SPF 15 and reapply sunscreen every 2 hours.
9. **Head indoors.** When the heat gets unbearable, try indoor activities at your local gym or rec center like basketball, swimming, yoga or racquetball. Or stay home and exercise to a fitness video online.
10. **Know the signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke and get help immediately if you see these signs.**

Symptoms of heat exhaustion:

- headaches
- heavy sweating
- cold, moist skin, chills
- dizziness or fainting
- a weak and rapid pulse
- muscle cramps
- fast, shallow breathing
- nausea, vomiting or both

If you experience these symptoms, move to a cooler place, stop exercising and cool down immediately by dousing yourself with cold water and rehydrating. You may need to seek medical attention.

Symptoms of heat stroke:

- warm, dry skin with no sweating
- strong and rapid pulse
- confusion and/or unconsciousness
- high fever
- throbbing headaches
- nausea, vomiting or both

If you experience these symptoms, seek medical attention right away.

For more tips on staying active and healthy this summer, visit www.heart.org/gettinghealthy and download the AHA's free "Warm Weather Fitness Guide" at <http://bit.ly/AHASummerGuide>.