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IT'S SUMMERTIME IN FLORIDA

Play it safe and keep it healthy!



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Martin County, FL – The Florida Department of Health (FDOH) encourages everyone to maximize the health benefits of days spent in and around Florida's waters: play it safe and keep it healthy.

Drowning Prevention

Children, teens and adults should never swim alone. Always use the buddy system when swimming in open water or in a pool. Someone watching from the shore or poolside who is aware of where swimmers are at all times is an important layer of protection.

More tips:

- If you plan to go to the beach, call the Martin County Beach Information Hotline: 772-320-3112 for updates before you leave home.
- Swim at guarded beaches and pay attention to safety flags that alert swimmers to dangerous conditions like rip tides.
- Open cuts or wounds should not be immersed in water; if there's bacteria in the water, they can enter the body through a cut or wound. Water should not be swallowed, as well.
- A cut or wound that happens when swimming, wading or boating should be washed with clean, running water and soap, and covered with a clean, dry waterproof bandage.

A Few Extra Precautions for Swimming in Warm Freshwater and Hot Springs

It's not safe to take in warm freshwater through the nose. Swimmers should wear nose clips or avoid putting their heads underwater. Digging in or stirring up mud and scum should be avoided.

Florida's Waters are Natural Places

All of Florida's natural waters are home to aquatic life, land animals and plants that should not be approached or touched by people. Swimmers, waders and boaters should stay away from red tides and algal blooms like blue green algae (cyanobacteria) that occur naturally. Both can cause skin irritation, burning eyes, and throat and breathing irritations.

The [Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission](#) posts the status of red tide locations and the [Florida Department of Environmental Protection](#) monitors blue green algae.

Beat the Heat: Prevent Heat Exhaustion

Symptoms of heat exhaustion include: headaches, dizziness, weakness, lightheadedness, irritability or confusion, upset stomach and vomiting. Heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke, which is the most serious form of heat injury.

Dress for the heat with lightweight, loose-fitting clothing and drink plenty of water before thirst sets in. Avoiding alcohol will also help keep the body hydrated.

Fight the Bite!

Wear lightweight clothing that covers arms and legs, and mosquito repellent, can keep pesky bites to a minimum. The [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#) keeps a current listing of safe and reliable repellents. For best results, follow all label directions. For mosquito breeding concerns, contact: Martin County Mosquito Control: 772-419-6974.

Food Safety Tips for the Outdoors

Raw meat and ready-to-eat food should be kept in separate insulated and chilled coolers (kept at 41° F or below). [StateFoodSafety.com](#) advises using clean plates and utensils when switching food preparation to cooking to avoid cross-contamination between raw food and cooked food. Using clean plates throughout the meal also keeps plates fresh and avoids cross-contamination between foods that have been sitting out in the temperature danger zone (41°F–135°F) and fresh foods.

A food thermometer is the best tool to ensure meat is cooked hot enough to kill harmful germs. The CDC's "[Get Ready to Grill Safely](#)" is a helpful checklist for keeping food transport and preparation safe.

Leftovers should be saved in small portions and refrigerated within two hours of cooking. If outside temperatures are greater than 90°F, leftovers should be refrigerated within one hour of cooking. Food left out more than two hours should be thrown out.

Remember Good Hygiene

FDOH reminds everyone preparing food to wash their hands with soap and clean, running water before and after handling raw meat, poultry and seafood, and to wash work surfaces, utensils and grills before cooking. Hands should be washed after using the bathroom, changing a diaper, coughing, sneezing or playing with a pet.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts. Follow us on Twitter at [@GoHealthyMartin](#) and on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit [www.MartinCountyHealth.com](#)

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