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SUMMER IS HERE!

Tips for a safe and healthy summer

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Martin County, FL – As residents plan for the Memorial Day weekend, the Florida Department of Health in Martin County (DOH-Martin) offers some tips to keep residents and visitors safe and healthy this summer.

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 knows where swimmers are at all times is an important layer of protection.

- If you plan to head to the beach, know before you go: 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 water and soap, and covered with a clean, dry waterproof bandage.

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). 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.

- People and pets should avoid contact with 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!

Wearing lightweight clothing that covers arms and legs, as well as mosquito repellent, can keep 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.

- Drain standing water in containers around your home to prevent mosquitoes from breeding.
- For mosquito breeding concerns, call Martin County Mosquito Control: 772-419-6974.

Food Safety Tips for the Outdoors

Bacteria multiply rapidly in warmer temperature, so keep cold food cold and hot food hot.

- Raw meat and ready-to-eat food should be kept in separate insulated and chilled coolers (kept at 41° F or below).
- Use a food thermometer to ensure meat is cooked enough to kill harmful germs. The CDC's "[Get Ready to Grill Safely](#)" is a helpful checklist for keeping food transport and preparation safe.
- Refrigerate leftovers within two hours of cooking. When in doubt, throw it out!

Remember Good Hygiene

Good handwashing is essential to good health.

- Be sure to wash your hands before eating or preparing food, after using the bathroom, changing a diaper, coughing, sneezing, or playing with 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.

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