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Stephen A. Martin, Jr., Ph.D., MPH
Chief Operating Officer

Summer has arrived - get out and enjoy it!

Cook County Department of Public Health Officials offer some summer safety tips to keep you and your family safe and healthy during the summer months.

“Today marks the first day of summer and it’s a perfect time to venture outdoors for family picnics or bike rides,” CCDPH COO Stephen A. Martin, Jr., Ph.D., M.P.H. said. “Unfortunately, it’s also a time when reports of foodborne illness and personal injuries increase. Follow our basic safety tips to help make your summer memories fun and healthy.”

Food Safety:

Picnics are part of summer fun, but illness should not be. Food safety when picnicking should be a number one priority:

- Always wash hands thoroughly before preparing food and after handling raw meats. Scrub fruits and vegetables.
- Avoid cross-contaminating foods by keeping each item separate. Wrap foods well.
- Keep food chilled. Don’t take food out of the refrigerator until it’s time to leave for the picnic. Stock a cooler with plenty of ice and maintain a temperature of 40 degrees F. Replenish ice as necessary.
- Cook or grill food properly. Make sure you bring a thermometer along to check on temperature. To ensure bacteria is destroyed, cook hamburgers to an internal temperature of 160 degrees F, ground poultry and poultry parts to 165 degrees F. Never partially cook food for later use.
- Put leftover perishable items back into the cooler immediately after grilling or serving. Food should never be left outside for more than an hour. When in doubt, throw it out.

Water Safety:

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drowning is the leading cause of death for children ages one to 14, with two children dying every day as a result of drowning.

- Always provide adult supervision while children are in or around water.
- Keep floatation devices on hand.
- Remember that lifeguards are on duty to respond to emergencies, not to supervise children.
- Maintain gates and fences around residential pools.
- Take a class and become certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

Bike, skateboard and inline skating safety:

Cyclers and skaters can easily protect themselves from the dangers of their sports by: checking for faulty equipment, wearing proper safety gear and obeying traffic laws.

- Helmets can save lives.
- Wrist guards and elbow and knee pads also greatly reduce injuries related to falls.
- Watch out for others: skaters, joggers, cyclists and automobiles all share park trails and streets. Always stay on the right side of trails and paths, look left-right-left when crossing and whether on a trail or in the street, and always pass on the left.

For more information please visit, www.cookcountypublichealth.org.

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