Wellness Works
Summer 2013

Practicing Water Safety Starts at Home
Swimming pools can be great backyard fun. To help keep children safe, make sure that you have a four-foot, four-sided fence with self-closing and self-latching gates. Pool fences should separate the house and play area from the pool.

Drowning accounts for the most injury deaths of children ages 1 to 4. Swimming pools are the main place where young children drown, followed by bathtubs. Here are a few tips to keep in mind:

• Never leave young children alone near any water.
• Keep a young child within arm’s reach in a bathtub.
• After using a bucket, always store away from young children.
• Keep bathroom doors closed or place locks on toilet seat covers.
• Learn CPR. It can save a life.
• Don’t drink alcohol before or when watching children in the pool.
• Learn to swim if you don’t know how.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Fight the Bite
Mosquitoes are a nuisance. But with the spread of the potentially deadly West Nile virus, you need to play it smart when mosquitoes are about.

With the right precautions, you can still enjoy time outdoors. Not all mosquitoes carry the virus. And even if you get the virus, you may not get sick. About 20 percent of infected people develop a mild, flu-like illness. Symptoms may include a fever, headache and body aches.

Your safest bet is to fend off mosquitoes. Apply insect sprays to clothing and exposed skin when outside. To protect your face, put repellent on your hands and rub it on, avoiding your eyes and mouth.

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The Skinny on Your Skin
Your skin is your body’s largest organ. Take steps to shield your skin from the sun every day. Apply a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30 that blocks both ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) rays. Apply it to areas that may be most prone to skin problems such as your neck, temples and ears. Wear clothing that protects your skin, such as wide-brimmed hats, long-sleeved shirts and long pants. Avoid being outdoors between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when the sun’s rays are strongest.

Source: National Institutes of Health

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Check Your Steps for Food Safety

This year, more than one in six people in the U.S. will get sick from food poisoning. More than 100,000 will go to the hospital for care. Taking these four basic steps at home can help keep you from getting sick from the food you eat.

Step One: Clean
Always wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and running water, before and after handling food. Wash cooking tools and counter tops. Wash fruits and veggies. But don’t wash meat, poultry or eggs. Washing raw meat and poultry can help germs spread.

Step Two: Separate
Harmful germs can spread from food to food. Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs away from other foods. Don’t put ready-to-eat food on plates or cutting boards that held raw meat, poultry or seafood.

Step Three: Cook
Food is safe to eat when it’s been cooked at a high enough temperature to kill harmful germs. Color or texture won’t tell you if you’ve reached that point. Use a food thermometer.

Step Four: Chill
Always put foods that can spoil in the refrigerator or freezer within two hours. If it’s 90°F or hotter, don’t leave food out for more than one hour. Never thaw food on the counter. Keep your fridge and freezer at 40°F or below for the fridge and below 0°F for the freezer. Store leftovers right away.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Saving Sight Indoors and Out

Home sweet home has many dangers that can hurt your eyes. In fact, household items cause 125,000 eye injuries each year. Most could be avoided with proper safety measures and protection for the eyes. Here are a few tips:

• Remove debris before mowing the lawn.
• Wear chemical goggles to guard against harmful products.
• Do not mix cleaning agents.
• Wear safety glasses to protect against flying debris when doing work around your home or yard.
• Follow all of the guidelines given by the makers of tools and equipment.
• Use protective eye wear when playing sports where there is a greater chance of eye injury.

Sources: Prevent Blindness America, National Institutes of Health