

## Outdoor Precautions

Warmer temperatures aren't just attractive to people, but to mosquitoes, ticks, and fleas. Mosquitoes can transmit West Nile virus; ticks can transmit Lyme disease and other serious infections; and fleas can transmit plague.

- ♥ To prevent these illnesses, use an appropriate insect and tick repellent and apply it properly.
- ♥ Prime mosquito-biting hours are usually dusk to dawn, but ticks are out at all times. Empty out any standing water on your property to eliminate breeding grounds. Secure all window and door screens tight and patch any holes.
- ♥ To keep ticks at a distance, avoid tick-infested areas (especially places with leaf-litter and high grasses) and use repellent containing 20% DEET.
- ♥ You can also treat clothing with the repellent, permethrin, (which protects through several washings) or purchase clothing that is pre-treated with permethrin. Always follow the directions on repellent packaging.
- ♥ After coming indoors, shower as soon as possible and check your body for ticks.
- ♥ Make sure that your children also bathe or shower and get checked for ticks. Wash and tumble dry your clothing and check your pets for ticks.
- ♥ If you find an attached tick, don't panic, ticks are easy to remove with a pair of fine-tipped tweezers. Consult your healthcare provider if you develop a rash, fever, body aches, or fatigue in the 1-3 weeks following a bite. It could be any number of illnesses.

## Central Mass Regional Public Health Alliance

*Building a Better Regional,  
Comprehensive Services Model to  
Improve Public Health*



### What is the Central Mass Regional Public Health Alliance (CMRPHA)?

The Central Mass Regional Public Health Alliance is a coalition of six municipalities (**Towns of Holden, Grafton, Leicester, Millbury, Shrewsbury, and West Boylston and the City of Worcester**) working cooperatively to create and sustain a viable, cost-effective and labor-efficient regional public health district. The regional health district provides a comprehensive array of services to partner municipalities through a single organization managed by Worcester's Division of Public Health. The inspiration to develop a regional alliance arose from the considerable disparity in size, available resources, and kinds and types of resources offered by each municipality.



## Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance

GRAFTON • HOLDEN • LEICESTER • MILLBURY •  
SHREWSBURY • WEST BOYLSTON • WORCESTER



## *Splash into Summer with Safety in Mind!*

School vacation is upon us! Heat and weather can make summer a fun –but potentially dangerous–time.

The Central Massachusetts Regional Public Health Alliance is urging parents and caretakers to remember the following summer safety tips as the kids head out to the pool, camp or even the backyard.

*Update: May 2014*

## Water Safety

- ♥ If you've never learned to swim, now's the time!
- ♥ It's always a good time to learn CPR—Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation—especially if you'll be supervising others.
- ♥ Always supervise young children around water (stay close enough to reach a child at all times and avoid distractions such as playing cards, reading a book, or talking on the phone). However, always have a phone near-by in case of an emergency.
- ♥ A drowning can happen quickly, and usually silently. Avoid alcohol while supervising children and before or during swimming, boating, or waterskiing.
- ♥ Prevent water-related injuries and drowning by swimming with a buddy and swimming where there's a lifeguard. Always use life jackets and secure personal flotation devices—do not substitute air-filled or foam toys for safety gear. When enjoying natural bodies of water, be aware of the local weather conditions and forecast. Strong winds and thunderstorms with lightning can be dangerous.
- ♥ Watch for dangerous waves and signs of rip tides/currents. Also know and obey the posted warnings. For example, beaches often have different colored flags (red, yellow, green) to indicate beach conditions. Pay attention to lifeguards or posted instructions.

## Sun Safety

- ♥ Seek shade, especially during midday hours.
- ♥ Wear clothing to protect exposed skin.
- ♥ Wear a hat with a wide brim to shade the face, head, ears, and neck.
- ♥ Wear sunglasses that wrap around and block as close to 100% of both UVA and UVB rays as possible.
- ♥ Use sunscreen with sun protective factor (SPF) 15 or higher, and both UVA and UVB protection.
- ♥ Avoid indoor tanning.

## Food Safety

- ♥ When grilling, use a meat thermometer to ensure that you cook meat and poultry thoroughly.
- ♥ Ground beef should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160°F. Also, put cooked meat on a clean platter, rather than back on the one that held the raw meat, to avoid cross-contamination.
- ♥ Whether you're cooking out in the backyard or on a picnic, always keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot.
- ♥ When you're finished eating, refrigerate leftovers promptly.

## Preventing Heat-Related Illness

- ♥ Drink more fluids (nonalcoholic), regardless of your activity level. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. Warning: If your doctor generally limits the amount of fluid you drink or has you on water pills, ask him how much you should drink while the weather is hot.
- ♥ Don't drink liquids that contain alcohol or large amounts of sugar—these actually cause you to lose more body fluid. Also, avoid very cold drinks, because they can cause stomach cramps.
- ♥ Stay indoors and, if at all possible, stay in an air-conditioned place.
- ♥ Electric fans may provide comfort, but when the temperature is in the high 90s, fans will not prevent heat-related illness. Taking a cool shower or bath, or moving to an air-conditioned place is a much better way to cool off.
- ♥ Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- ♥ NEVER leave anyone or pets in a closed, parked vehicle.
- ♥ Visit adults at risk at least twice a day and closely watch them for signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Infants and young children, of course, need much more frequent watching.
- ♥ If you must be out in the heat, limit your outdoor activity to morning and evening hours.
- ♥ Cut down on exercise. If you must exercise, drink two to four glasses of cool, nonalcoholic fluids each hour. A sports beverage can replace the salt and minerals you lose in sweat.
- ♥ Try to rest often in shady areas.
- ♥ Protect yourself from the sun by wearing a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses and by putting on sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher.
- ♥ For more information, contact your primary care physician.