

Three tips for a safe summer

The first day of summer is here. According to the Old Farmer's Almanac summer officially kicked off this morning, June 21, at 6:07 a.m.

We've already had a few scorching days and a severe thunderstorm. Each promise an interesting season ahead. It's good to always be prepared to have a safe and enjoyable summer.

First on the list of things to remember is that leaving your child or pet in the car is not safe. It doesn't matter if you plan to be in and out at your destination. A quick stop, even with the windows cracked, can be deadly for those who can't escape the quickly escalating temperatures of a vehicle left in the hot summer sun.

This year already there has been a tragic accident involving a toddler who was left in a car in Burlington. **The CBC reported**, "An autopsy has concluded the boy, who police believe was three years old, died after being exposed to high temperatures for an extended period of time, according to Halton Regional Police."

Please, don't assume leaving your child or pet in a car will be fine. Temperatures rise more quickly than you'd assume in a vehicle and accidents happen.

Second on the list of things to remember when dealing with hot temperatures, stay hydrated. In Canada, when it's cold, it's really cold and when it's hot, it's really hot. If you're out doing regular yard work or out for your daily walk and the sun is beating down on you, it's easy to get heat stroke. Take care of yourself, it isn't hard to bring a bottle of water with you. Make it a reusable one if you can.

The **Canadian Red Cross** lists the signs of heatstroke as "cramps or muscle tightening, usually in the legs and abdomen but they can be in other parts of the body, headaches, nausea, dizziness, weakness, and feeling faint, skin that is redder or paler than usual, or moist skin, rapid shallow breathing and irritable, bizarre or aggressive behaviour."

If you see someone who may be having a heat-related emergency, or think you may be suffering one yourself, it suggests moving to a cooler location, drinking cool water and/or putting it on the person's or your skin, loosening any tight clothing, and "if [your or] the person's condition is severe, put covered ice packs in each armpit and on the back of the person's neck."

Of course, call emergency services if needed.

Number three, sunscreen, sunscreen, sunscreen. It's no secret that our atmosphere is changing and with it is the sun's capacity to be harmful.

"No one is completely safe from the sun," **according to the Canadian Cancer Society**. "In Canada, sunlight is strong enough to cause skin cancer, premature aging of the skin and harm to the eyes. Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer, and it's also one of the most preventable." If you've spent a lot of time in the sun and you notice that your skin is looking different from normal, contact someone like [doctor glebe](#) and book a skin cancer appointment. It's always better to be safe than sorry.

The society recommends six tips for staying sun safe: check the UV Index, seek shade, cover up, wear sunglasses, use a sunblock with an SPF of 30 or higher and stay away from indoor tanning beds.

"On days when the UV Index reaches 3 (moderate) or more, you need to be extra careful to protect your skin. Try to reduce your time in the sun between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. ? when the sun's rays are at their strongest ? or any time of the day when the UV Index is 3 or more," it states.

If you can keep these three things in mind, you should be fine. Here's to an absolutely wonderful and warm summer season. We've

earned it!