

SUMMER 2025
EDITION

AGEING SAFELY... LATEST NEWS

*Ageing Safely in the home of YOUR Choice – Ideas and Tips to
maximize your Health and Wellness.*

WELCOME TO THE SUMMER 2025 NEWSLETTER

This information bulletin provides tips to be
considered for a safe and healthy Summer.

Ageing Safely in the Home of YOUR Choice

Ideas and Tips to Customize your Home
into a Senior-Friendly Environment



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As summer arrives, seniors may find themselves eager to enjoy the outdoors and participate in seasonal activities. However, staying safe during the summer months is crucial, as the heat and increased outdoor activities can pose unique challenges. Here are some practical tips and ideas to help seniors enjoy a safe and enjoyable summer.

Stay Hydrated and Staying Cool

One of the most critical aspects of summer safety is staying hydrated. Seniors are often more susceptible to dehydration, which can lead to serious health issues. It's essential to drink plenty of water throughout the day, even if you don't feel thirsty. Aim for at least eight glasses of water daily, and consider consuming hydrating foods like fruits and vegetables, such as watermelon, cucumbers, and oranges.

- **Drink Regularly:** Don't wait until you feel thirsty to drink water.
- **Avoid Alcohol and Caffeine:** These can contribute to dehydration.
- **Eat Hydrating Foods:** Include fruits and vegetables with high water content in your diet.
- **Air Conditioning:** Seek out air-conditioned spaces like malls, libraries, or senior centers during the hottest parts of the day.

Disclaimer:

The information highlighted in this document are suggestions.

Information is widely available on the web and provided as a reference and your awareness. Seniors' concerns and issues change over time.

Always verify for current and factual information on trusted websites.

- **Limit Oven Use:** Reduce heat in the home by using the oven less and keeping curtains closed during the middle of the day. Close all windows and dawn and south facing curtains, keeping night freshness in the home.
- **Cool Showers/Baths:** Taking cool showers or baths can help lower body temperature.
- **Importance of hydration:** Drink plenty of water and natural juices throughout the day, even if you don't feel thirsty. Fresh lemons are usually affordable during the summer. Make a batch of lemonade.(Ingredients: Mix 1 ¾ cups granular Stevia or Monk fruit with one cup of water, add 2 cups fresh lemon juice, and 6 cups cold water. Optional: add ice cubes and refrigerate).
- **Light Clothing:** Wear lightweight, loose-fitting, and light-colored clothing to help regulate body temperature.
- **Stay Informed:** Monitor weather forecasts and heat advisories.

Dress for the Heat

Wearing appropriate clothing can help regulate body temperature.

Lightweight, loose-fitting, and light-colored garments allow for better airflow and minimize heat retention. A wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses can protect you from the sun's harmful rays. It's also wise to apply sunscreen to exposed skin to prevent sunburn, choosing a SPF of 30 or higher for optimal protection.

- **Sun and Heat Safety:** Limit Outdoor Activities: Avoid strenuous activities during peak sun hours (typically 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.).
- **Seek Shade:** Use umbrellas, canopies, or find shady spots when outdoors.
- **Sunscreen and Protective Clothing:** Apply sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher and wear hats and sunglasses that block UV rays.
- **Be Aware of Medications:** Some medications can increase sensitivity to the sun or affect the body's ability to regulate temperature.

Other Important Tips:

- **Stay Connected:** Check on friends and neighbours and have someone check on you.
- **Prevent Falls:** Ensure good lighting, clear pathways, and use assistive devices like canes or walkers. The book 'Ageing Safely in

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the Home of YOUR Choice contain hundreds of tips to identify and eliminate or mitigate tripping hazards present in most homes.

- **Recognize Symptoms of Heat Illness:** Be aware of the signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke.
- **Have a Plan:** Develop a plan for summer safety, including what to do in case of a heatwave or other emergency.

Dress for the warmer temperatures

As the temperature and humidity levels rise, be sure to dress appropriately. Stick to lightweight, loose-fitting garments made of cotton, linen, or other natural fibres. Avoid synthetic fabrics as they can trap heat and perspiration against the body. Have a light wrap handy in case you go into an air-conditioned space to escape the heat.

Protect your skin from the sun

It's natural to want to sit and relax under the sun. However, be sure to exercise prudence by protecting yourself against harmful UV rays that can damage your skin and increase the risk of skin cancer. Apply a broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher every two hours you're outside. Wear a wide-brimmed hat to protect yourself from heatstroke and avoid direct exposure to the sun during peak hours (10 am to 3 pm).

Use eye protection

Prolonged sun exposure can damage your eyes. Whenever you're outside in direct sunlight, wear sunglasses with 100% UV protection. Also, opt for the largest size possible to block the sun from your eyes at every angle.

Be careful with medications

Medications can sometimes cause increased sun sensitivity. Check your prescription for possible side effects of sun exposure while taking it and limit your time outside accordingly. If you have any questions or concerns, consult with the prescribing physician or your pharmacist.

Prepare your home for hot days

The last thing anyone wants during the summer is a broken air conditioning system. Be sure to have your system inspected before the hot weather arrives. You can install window units to protect against humidity if you don't have central air. Another way to cool your indoor space is to open the windows early in the morning and evening and use fans to circulate the cooler air.

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Plan Your Activities Wisely

Take advantage of the cooler parts of the day for outdoor activities. Early morning or late afternoon is ideal for exercising, gardening, or walking. Avoiding the peak heat hours between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. can significantly reduce heat-related risks. Schedule indoor activities during the hottest hours, perhaps catching up on a good book or enjoying a favourite film.

Recognize Heat-Related Illnesses

Be aware of the signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke, particularly if you spend considerable time outdoors. Symptoms of heat exhaustion include heavy sweating, weakness, dizziness, or headaches. If you or someone you know experiences these symptoms, move to a shaded area, drink cool fluids, and rest. Heat stroke is more severe and requires immediate medical attention, as it can manifest as a high body temperature, confusion, or loss of consciousness. If you have access to a basement, that area tends to be fresher.

Know where public cooling stations are

On extremely hot days, temperatures inside homes with inadequate or no air conditioning can rise to dangerous levels. Ensure you receive your communities' or municipalities' newsletter about heat warnings and local public cooling stations during sweltering weather, so know where they are in case you need a place to cool down.

Stay Connected

Isolation can be common during hot months when conditions may limit outdoor interaction. Maintain regular communication with family and friends, either through phone calls or video chats. Consider joining community programs or taking part in local events tailored for seniors. Staying connected can provide both emotional support and encouragement to engage in safe activities.

Create a Safe Outdoor Environment

If you have a garden or spend time in your backyard, make sure it is safe and accessible. Remove any trip hazards, like garden tools or uneven surfaces. Consider installing shade structures or patio awnings to provide relief from the sun while you enjoy your space. Having a friend or family member nearby can also add a layer of safety.

- **Take precautions against insects:** Ticks, mosquitoes, fleas, and other insects are more than just nuisances. They can infect humans with dangerous illnesses such as Lyme disease and West Nile virus. You can take precautions by:
 - Applying insect repellent

- Wearing long-sleeved shirts and pants, especially when hiking, picnicking, or spending time in bushy areas or places with tall grass
- Tucking your pants into your socks or boots to protect against ticks
- Avoiding or removing standing water where mosquitoes tend to breed
- Check your entire body for ticks when you get home. If you find any, seek medical attention immediately.

Be vigilant of the signs of heat-related health conditions

You can have too much of a good thing if fun in the sun causes a heat-related illness. If you're sweating heavily, have a rapid pulse, feel confused, have dry, flushed skin, or start having muscle cramps, you might be suffering from heat exhaustion. Move to a cooler place, soak clothing in cool water, and place a wet cloth or ice on the head, neck, armpits and groin. If you think you or someone with you has heatstroke, call 911 – it's a condition that warrants emergency treatment.

Keep Emergency Information Accessible

Having easy access to emergency contacts and important medical information is vital. Consider carrying an ID with critical information or keeping it close at home. This could include medications you take, allergies, and contact numbers for family or healthcare providers.

- **Have a plan for summer weather emergencies:** Summer isn't just the peak season for hot, humid weather. It's also a heightened time of the year for thunderstorms. Be sure to stay indoors if you hear thunder. Tornadoes usually peak in the spring but can also happen in the summer. Keep an eye on weather alerts and follow the instructions of your local weather advisory.

<https://www.theweathernetwork.com/en/city/ca/ontario/ottawa/current>

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