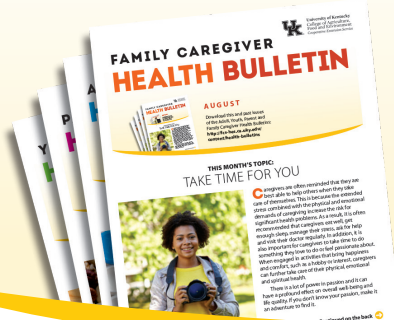




University of Kentucky
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment
Cooperative Extension Service

FAMILY CAREGIVER HEALTH BULLETIN



AUGUST 2022

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

SUNSHINE AND SUN SAFETY FOR SENIORS



According to the CDC, spending time outdoors and getting moderate sun exposure is good for you. It can enhance overall well-being and life quality. Various research reports that sunshine can boost your mood and make you feel calm and alert. It can decrease the risk of depression. It improves sleep and lowers stress. Sunshine has been associated with lowering blood pressure, which reduces the risk of stroke and heart disease. Being outdoors on a sunny day can also promote physical activity and weight loss. The sun's best known benefit is its ability to activate vitamin D levels in the body which, among other things in the body, helps strengthen the immune system and protect older adults from osteoporosis.

But too much exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays increases the risk for skin cancer and eye disease. The sun, combined with aging, also

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Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.

Apply sunscreen with at least SPF 15, stay in the shade, and wear protective clothing.

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contributes to wrinkles, and rough, dry skin. Even the amount of vitamin D a person's skin makes depends on factors such as skin tone, where you live, time of year, time of day, and weather conditions. Some people may need to stay out of the sun because of medical conditions and/or medications. Talk to your health-care provider about vitamin D levels and UV exposure from sunlight at least once a year.

If you or your loved one is going to be in the sun for more than 15 minutes, be sure to think about sun and heat safety. According to the CDC, people 65 and older are at greater risk for heat-related health concerns. Older adults can have a harder time adjusting to temperature changes. Certain health conditions and medications may create adverse reactions in the heat. When unnoticed or untreated, heat-related illnesses can lead to death. Be sure to enjoy the sun and outdoors while keeping cool and healthy.

- Apply sunscreen with at least SPF 15, stay in the shade, and wear protective clothing.
- Wear sunglasses and/or a wide-brimmed hat.
- Stay hydrated. Do not wait until you are thirsty to drink.
- Wear loose-fitting clothes.
- Talk to a health-care provider about medications and potential adverse side effects from sun exposure.
- Don't overwork yourself, and move slowly to prevent overheating.
- Recognize signs of heat-related illness and seek medical care immediately. According to the CDC, symptoms may include dizziness, muscle cramps, headaches, swelling in legs or ankles, nausea or vomiting, excessive thirst, loss of coordination, sweating, cold clammy skin, rapid pulse, and weakness.

Spend time outdoors, but know how to stay safe. Remember what warning signs to look for and what to do to stay protected and safe.



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Written by: Amy F. Kostelic,
Associate Extension Professor,
Adult Development and Aging

Edited by: Alyssa Simms

Designed by: Rusty Manseau

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