



A Local Healthy Maine Partnership

National Safety Month

June 2009 Newsletter

Healthy Waldo County



Summer Fun: Safe Driving

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The school year ends with graduation. As a parent, you want the summer festivities to be special, but also safe. Encourage your teen to practice safe driving behaviors while going to and from graduation and beyond. Traffic crashes are the leading cause of teen fatalities, accounting for 75 percent of all unintentional teen deaths.

Most Americans typically learn to drive during the teen years, when the brain is not fully mature yet. Recent research is beginning to give us insight why many teens have difficulty regulating risk-taking behavior:

- The area of the brain that weighs consequences, suppresses impulses and organizes thoughts does not fully mature until about age 25.
- Hormones are more active in teens, which influence the brain's neurochemicals that regulate excitability and mood. The result can be thrill-seeking behavior and experiences that create intense feelings.

Safe Driving Tips for Parents

Require your teen to wear a seatbelt.

Eliminate distractions, including cell phone use while driving.

Spend time with your teen behind the wheel. The experience will help to build confidence and decision making skills.

Set a zero tolerance policy for alcohol and other drugs.

Know who your teen is driving with and limit the number of teen passengers.

Set a curfew and wait up for your teen.

If your teen is not driving, know who your teen is riding with and whether that teen is a competent driver.



Congratulations 2009 Graduates!

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Sun Safety– Choose your Cover



Cool and cloudy?

You will still need protection.

Clouds do not block UV rays!

Choose Your Cover



Seek Shade from UV rays, especially during midday



Cover Up to protect exposed skin



Get a Hat with a wide brim



Grab Shades that block both UVA and UVB rays



Rub On Sunscreen – at least SPF 15 or higher and both UVA and UVB protection

Tips on Dehydration

Sun, fresh air and relaxation on a sandy beach. What could be better! Along with protecting your skin and eyes from the sun, you need to remember to hydrate. Drinking non-alcoholic and decaffeinated fluids will help to replace the fluids that you are losing. Alternate alcohol/ caffeinated drinks with water while in the sun and avoid mixing prescriptions medications with alcohol. Symptoms of dehydration are dizziness, weakness, muscle spasms, confusion and passing out.



Risk Factors for Skin Cancer

People with certain risk factors are more likely than others to develop skin cancer. Risk factors vary for different types of skin cancer, but some general risk factors are having:

- A lighter natural skin color.
- Family history of skin cancer.
- A personal history of skin cancer.
- Exposure to the sun through work and play.
- A history of sunburns early in life.
- Skin that burns, freckles, reddens easily, or becomes painful in the sun.
- Blue or green eyes.
- Blond or red hair.
- Certain types and a large number of moles.

When Does Drinking Become a Problem?

In most cases, someone who is dependent on alcohol does not recognize that they have a problem. If you find the answer is “yes” to even two or three of the questions below, you should seriously consider the possibility that your alcohol is a problem.

1. Do you ever drink heavily when you are disappointed, under pressure or have had a quarrel with someone?
2. Do you sometimes feel guilty about your drinking ? Do you do things while under the influence that you wouldn't do otherwise? Do you find yourself regretting them later?
3. Do you tell yourself you can stop drinking any time you want to, but you keep getting drunk when you don't intend to?
4. Has a family member, friend, or your employer ever expressed concern or complained about your drinking ? Are you annoyed by their concern? Do you become defensive?
5. Do you sometimes have the “shakes” in the morning and find that it helps to have a “little” drink, or medication of some kind?
6. Do you ever wake up the morning after with no memory of the night before? Have these “blackouts” become more frequent?
7. Do you find yourself lying to your spouse, your kids, your friends, your employer to cover up your drinking - - though you really don't like lying?
8. Have you had financial, work, family or legal problems as a result of your drinking ?
9. Do you drink alone?
10. Have you driven a car while intoxicated ? Have you ever been arrested for driving under the influence of a substance?
11. Have you been drunk more than four times in the past year?
12. Do you need to resort to alcohol in order to do something (start the day, work, have sex, or socialize, for example) or to change how you feel (sad, scared, anxious or angry), to banish shyness or bolster confidence?
13. Do you notice you have an increased need for more alcohol in order to feel high?
14. Do you sometimes feel uncomfortable when you have to be somewhere where no alcohol will be available? When drinking with other people, do you try to have a few extra drinks when others won't know about it? Do you keep going when everyone else has had enough?
15. Are most of your friends or acquaintances people you drink with? Do you try to avoid other friends and family when you're drinking ?
16. Has your drinking use led to conflicts with your friends or family members? Do you regularly hide alcohol from those close to you so that they will not know how much you are using?

Am I drinking heavily?

Yes if you are a woman that has more than 3 drinks every day or 21 drinks a week.

Yes if you are a man that has more than 5 drinks every day or 35 drinks per week.

Am I taking risks with alcohol?

Yes if you:

Drink and drive, operate machinery or mix alcohol with prescription medication.

Don't tell your doctor, surgeon or pharmacist that you are a regular drinker

Are pregnant or trying to become pregnant and drink at all

Drink alcohol while you are looking after small children

Recognizing that you have a problem with alcohol is the first step to recovering from a chemical dependency. If you think that you or a family member may have a problem with alcohol, contact your family doctor .

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We're on the web:
www.healthywaldocounty.org

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Outdoor Food Safety Tips

Summer is here and it is time for cookouts and picnics. Here are a few tips to keep your outdoor meals safe:

When transporting food:

Coolers must keep food at least 40 degrees or plan foods that are less perishable like sandwich meats, cheese and peanut butter.

Place drinks in a separate cooler as it will be opened often.

Plan to take only what will be eaten so that there won't be a lot of leftovers.

Pack condiments in small containers rather than taking whole jars.

If you cook food ahead, make sure that it has been chilled thoroughly before putting it into the cooler.

If you are grilling:

Take out only what you will be cooking right away.

Use clean cutting surfaces, utensils and plates.

Transfer cooked food onto a clean plate.

Never reuse marinades that come in contact with raw meat, poultry or fish and don't put the cooked food back in the unwashed marinades container.

Cover the table: If you are eating at a public picnic table, consider bringing a table cloth. This will cut down on contact with possible contamination or allergens.

Cross contamination occurs when food becomes tainted by an allergen during food preparation, cooking, serving or storage. Use separate cutting boards and knives for meats, poultry and fish and fruits and vegetables. Use separate serving spoons for each side dish. When using a community grill, cover the grill with foil or cook in a cast iron skillet. When cooking watch for cross contamination with the cooking utensils and undercooked food.