

# health sense



Spring–Summer 2018

## Stay safe in the sun

**S**tanding in the sun is one of life's great pleasures.

But it's not without risk—from the sting of a sunburn to the danger of skin cancer.

So how much do you know about sun safety?

**1. True or false:** People of all skin colors are at risk for skin cancer.

**True.** Those with very fair skin are more prone to sunburn and, as a result, skin cancer. But people of any skin tone can get the disease.

**2. True or false:** One application of sunscreen protects you for a full day.

**False.** Generally, you'll need to reapply sunscreen at least every 2 hours. And more often if you're sweating or swimming. Look for a

broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher.

**3. True or false:** When you use sunscreen properly, it's safe to spend as much time in the sun as you'd like.

**False.** The proper use of sunscreen offers valuable protection. But staying out of direct sunlight is a good idea, when possible. That

means seeking shade and wearing clothing that covers your skin.

**4. True or false:** Sunscreen with an SPF of 30 blocks the sun's rays longer than a sunscreen with a lower SPF.

**False.** SPF refers to how well, rather than how long, sunscreen protects your skin from burning. Because the majority of sunscreens last the same amount of time, it's always important to reapply often, no matter the SPF.

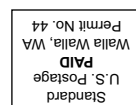
**5. True or false:** You don't need sun protection on cloudy days.

**False.** Up to 80% of the sun's ultraviolet rays can get through clouds, so sunburn is possible even on overcast days. Sun damage happens in winter too.

**6. True or false:** A base tan from a tanning salon will prevent sunburn when people are outdoors.

**False.** Any tanning does damage to the skin. And indoor tanning can cause skin cancer and wrinkling. It's best to avoid it.

Sources: American Academy of Dermatology; American Cancer Society; U.S. Food and Drug Administration



# Enjoy a safe summer

**S**ummer is a laid-back time. We think of flip-flops, T-shirts and barbecues. In summer, it's easy to be casual about many things, but it's not good to be casual about safety. With warm weather comes the risk for certain injuries and health problems—some serious enough to be life-threatening.

Here are some ways to keep you and your family safe:



## Secure home windows.

Opening the windows is a must if you don't have air conditioning or if you're simply trying to keep your electric bill in check. But keep safety in mind if children are in your home. Every year thousands of kids in the United States are killed or injured in falls from windows. Don't count on screens to keep kids safe. Your best choice is to install window guards or window stops—especially on bedroom windows. You can buy them online or at hardware stores. Keep furniture away from windows. That will discourage kids from climbing near them.



## Make helmets a priority.

Many kids practically live on their bikes during the summer. Before your kids head out for their wheeled adventures, make sure they're wearing a helmet. To make sure everyone is protected, you should bear in mind the same advice. Helmets help reduce the risk of head injury—such as concussion and other traumatic brain injuries—and of death from bicycle crashes. Wearing a helmet is not only a good idea but is also required by law for all minors younger than 18 years of age, according to California Vehicle Code § 21212, which requires cyclists under the age of 18 to wear helmets. This law states specifically that a person under 18 years of age shall not operate a bicycle, a nonmotorized scooter, or a skateboard; nor shall they wear in-line or roller skates; nor ride upon a bicycle, a nonmotorized scooter, or a skateboard as a passenger upon a street, bikeway, or any other public bicycle path or trail unless they are wearing a properly fitted and fastened bicycle helmet that meets the standards of either the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) or the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).



## Watch out for heatstroke.

As the temperature rises, so does the risk of a heat-related illness. The most serious one is heatstroke. It is a medical emergency. Signs and symptoms include a body temperature above 103 degrees; hot, red, dry or moist skin; a rapid and strong pulse; and possible unconsciousness. Call 911 immediately if you think someone has heatstroke. Move the person to a cooler environment. Try to bring his or her temperature down with cool cloths or a bath. Do not give the person fluids.



## Know the signs of anaphylaxis.

This is an allergic reaction. It can be deadly. It is most often caused by foods, insect stings and medications. Signs and symptoms may include a red rash (usually itchy) with hives or welts; swelling in the throat or other areas of the body; wheezing; and trouble breathing or swallowing.

Anaphylaxis requires immediate medical attention, including an injection of the drug epinephrine and a trip to the hospital emergency department.

Sources: American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Safe Kids Worldwide; U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

# A family guide to sunscreens

**D**oes your idea of family fun include spending time outdoors? Then it's important to protect the whole gang from the sun's damaging ultraviolet (UV) rays.

There's nothing cool about painful sunburns, early wrinkles or a raised risk of skin cancer. And yet that's just what too much UV exposure can bring. One way to help keep your family safe: Make sure everyone gets their sunscreen on.

Here's what you need to know to get started:

**Check the label.** When shopping for sunscreen, make sure you choose one that:

- Offers broad-spectrum protection from UVA and UVB rays.
- Has a sun protective factor (SPF) of at least 30. This dermatologist-recommended level of protection blocks 97% of the sun's rays.
- Is water-resistant.

**Apply sunscreen before you go outside.** It takes about 15 minutes for its protection to kick in.

**Use enough of the stuff.** Many people make the mistake of using too little sunscreen. Experts recommend using at least 1 ounce—about the amount you can hold in the palm of your hand—to cover exposed skin. This includes the face, ears, arms, hands, nose, neck and feet. Use a lip balm with sunscreen in it to protect your lips.

**Reapply at least every 2 hours.** But put some more on immediately after you swim or sweat excessively.

## Lather up the kids too.

Follow the label instructions when applying sunscreen to children's exposed skin. If you have a baby younger than 6 months, it's best to keep him or her in the shade to protect that sensitive skin.

You'll also want to help your family avoid getting too much sun. Encourage everyone to seek a shady spot whenever possible. And before you head outside, hand out some wide-brimmed hats and sunglasses.

Sources: American Academy of Dermatology; U.S. Food and Drug Administration



## Breastfeeding program

**W**e're happy to offer a new service to breastfeeding mothers. Contra Costa Health Plan (CCHP) Medi-Cal members who don't qualify for WIC or need urgent assistance (within 24 hours) may be eligible for this program. The service allows for an individual known as a consultant, who is certified as an internationally board-certified lactation consultant (IBCLC), to provide support and counseling to the breastfeeding mother in her home. Members can call the CCHP Advice Nurse line at **877-661-6230 (option 1)** to access this program. You do not need an authorization from your doctor.

Those who do not qualify for this program can still receive support from Family Maternal Child Health at **800-696-9644** or by accessing the Contra Costa County Breastfeeding Resource guide online at **[cchealth.org/healthplan/health-ed-breastfeeding.php](http://cchealth.org/healthplan/health-ed-breastfeeding.php)**.

# Let the experts handle fireworks

**W**hen it comes to fireworks, here's advice that could spare you—or a loved one—an injury: Leave the shows to the pros.

Fireworks hurt thousands of people in the United States every year. Injuries include severe burns and eye injuries. Many are serious emergencies. Some are deadly. And those hurt or killed are often children or bystanders.

Even sparklers are dangerous. They burn at about 2,000 degrees. That's hot enough to burn some metals. These account for 25% of fireworks injuries treated at emergency departments.

Back yard fireworks simply aren't safe. If you want to ooh and aah at fireworks this summer, it's best to take in a public display.

That said, if you do light fireworks yourself:

- Never allow young children to play with or light fireworks.
- Never place any part of your body directly over a fireworks device when lighting the fuse.

- Never try to relight or pick up fireworks that have not ignited fully at first.
- Keep a bucket of water or garden hose nearby.

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics; Consumer Product Safety Commission; National Fire Protection Agency



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## Avoiding mosquito bites this summer

**M**ost mosquito bites are just an itchy annoyance. But they can be dangerous too.

Some mosquitos carry viruses or parasites. These include the West Nile virus, the Zika virus and yellow fever. These can enter your body when the bugs suck your blood. And they can make you very sick.

That's why it's best to keep mosquitos away from you and your family. Here's how:

### When outdoors

- **Use bug spray.** Check the label. Look for DEET, picaridin, IR3535 or oil of lemon eucalyptus. And choose products registered with the Environmental Protection Agency. Spray it on your skin and clothing, but not under your clothes.
- **Take cover.** Wear long sleeves and pants, and socks too. If your garments are thin, spray them as well. You can also buy clothing and gear treated with repellent.

- **Try mosquito netting.** Use it on your child's crib, stroller and carrier.

### At home

- **Don't let them in.** Install screens on doors and windows. Repair any holes.
  - **Keep windows closed.** Use air conditioning if you have it.
  - **Prevent breeding sites.** Standing water attracts mosquitoes. Don't leave water in planters, buckets, pet dishes, toys, trash cans or gutters.
- Clean birdbaths at least once a week.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Institutes of Health

# Case managers

## GUIDES FOR YOUR GOOD HEALTH

**W**ould you like help with your health care needs? That's what our case managers do. We are a team of

nurses and social workers. Our health care experts can help you get the care you need. They will work with you, your family and your doctor to improve your health. In addition, they can connect you to needed local resources. The service is free for Contra Costa Health Plan members. This service is offered over the phone.

Ask for a case manager if you have:

- A hard time getting to your doctor visits, taking your meds as you should or eating well.
- Gone to the emergency room a lot (more than 3 times this year).
- Gone to, or had to stay in, the hospital a lot (more than 2 times this year).
- Difficulty with stable housing, lack of transportation to get to medical appointments, lack of food, or any other situation that may negatively affect your health.
- Changes in your memory, mood, personality or behavior.
- Health issues that need to be watched closely.
- Any worries about caring for yourself or your loved ones.



### Call now

Get in touch with a case manager. Call **925-313-6887**.

- Please leave a message.
- Be sure to tell us what time we can reach you.
- We will return your call.
- You have the right to decline or stop this service at any time.

Contra Costa Health Plan complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

ATTENTION: If you speak a language other than English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call **877-661-6230** (California Relay for hearing-impaired: **800-735-2929**).

El Plan de Salud de Contra Costa cumple con las leyes federales de derechos civiles aplicables y no discrimina por motivos de raza, color, nacionalidad, edad, discapacidad o sexo.

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al **877-661-6230, opción 2**, o al California Relay, el número para personas con discapacidad auditiva: **800-735-2929**.



## Do you need an interpreter who speaks your language?

**W**hen you're sick, it's easier to talk to a doctor who speaks your language. Our Member Services can help you choose one who does. We have a lot of doctors who speak more than one language. But their location may not always work for you.

A second option is interpreter services. We have trained interpreters who can help you by phone and sometimes in person. They speak many languages, including sign language. Interpreters make sure that you and your doctor know what each other is saying. With their help, you can get all your questions answered.

This service is free and easy to use. If you think you need an interpreter at your next doctor visit, ask for one. If you have any problems getting an interpreter, call Member Services at **877-661-6230, option 1.**

## Advice Nurses and urgent care

If you are sick or hurt, you may need urgent care. That means you need quick care, but it's not an emergency. Not sure what kind of care you need? Call the Advice Nurse line.

We're here to help Contra Costa Health Plan (CCHP) members. We are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including holidays. Just call **877-661-6230, option 1.**

If you're calling for your child, make sure your child is with you when you call.

Depending on your symptoms, you may be eligible for the following:

- An urgent care visit.
- A telephone call with a CCHP doctor.
- An order for meds.

Nurses can also give you advice on:

- Test results.
- Questions on health care and meds.
- Infectious disease exposure.
- Caring for yourself or a family member.
- Current vaccine info for you or your child.
- Health resources in your community.

**» WE'RE HERE TO HELP**  
Contra Costa Health Plan members. We are open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including holidays. Just call **877-661-6230, option 1.**

QUALITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

# How we improve your care

**C**ontra Costa Health Plan's Quality Management (QM) Program always works to improve the care that our members get. One way we do that is by checking to see if our members are getting the right health checks at the right times. Also, we bring together teams to do Performance Improvement Projects. Their goal is to improve care. Right now we are working to improve care related to high blood pressure and to asthma.

The program also supports adults with diabetes and families with obese kids. We also look into problems with clinical care.

We ensure that members can get health education, translation and interpreters as needed.

To learn more about the program, visit [cchealth.org/healthplan/quality.php](http://cchealth.org/healthplan/quality.php). Or call us at **925-313-6917**, and we will send you a copy of the QM Program description.



## How CCHP compares to similar health plans

|                                 |                   |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Immunizations for children      | Better            |
| Care for pregnant women         | Much better       |
| Well-child visits               | About as good     |
| Controlling high blood pressure | About as good     |
| Asthma care                     | Needs improvement |

## What is the CCHP Utilization Management (UM) Unit's role?

UM's role is to review your doctor's medical requests so that we make sure the requested services match your benefits and assure that appropriate medical care is received. These include requests such as the need to see a specialist or approval getting a wheelchair or hospital bed.

We make decisions based on what care is needed to best support your health and what is covered through your insurance plan. Clinical guidelines are used to make these decisions and are available to you. Our doctors and staff are **not** rewarded or given incentives to deny or to cover any of these requests.

The UM Unit's office hours are Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. If you have a question regarding a request, please call the UM department at **877-661-6230 (press 4)**.

If you call after work hours or on weekends or holidays, stay on the line to be directed to the Advice Nurse Unit.

# Salmon burgers and sweet potato oven fries

*Makes 4 servings.*

## Ingredients

### Sweet potato oven fries

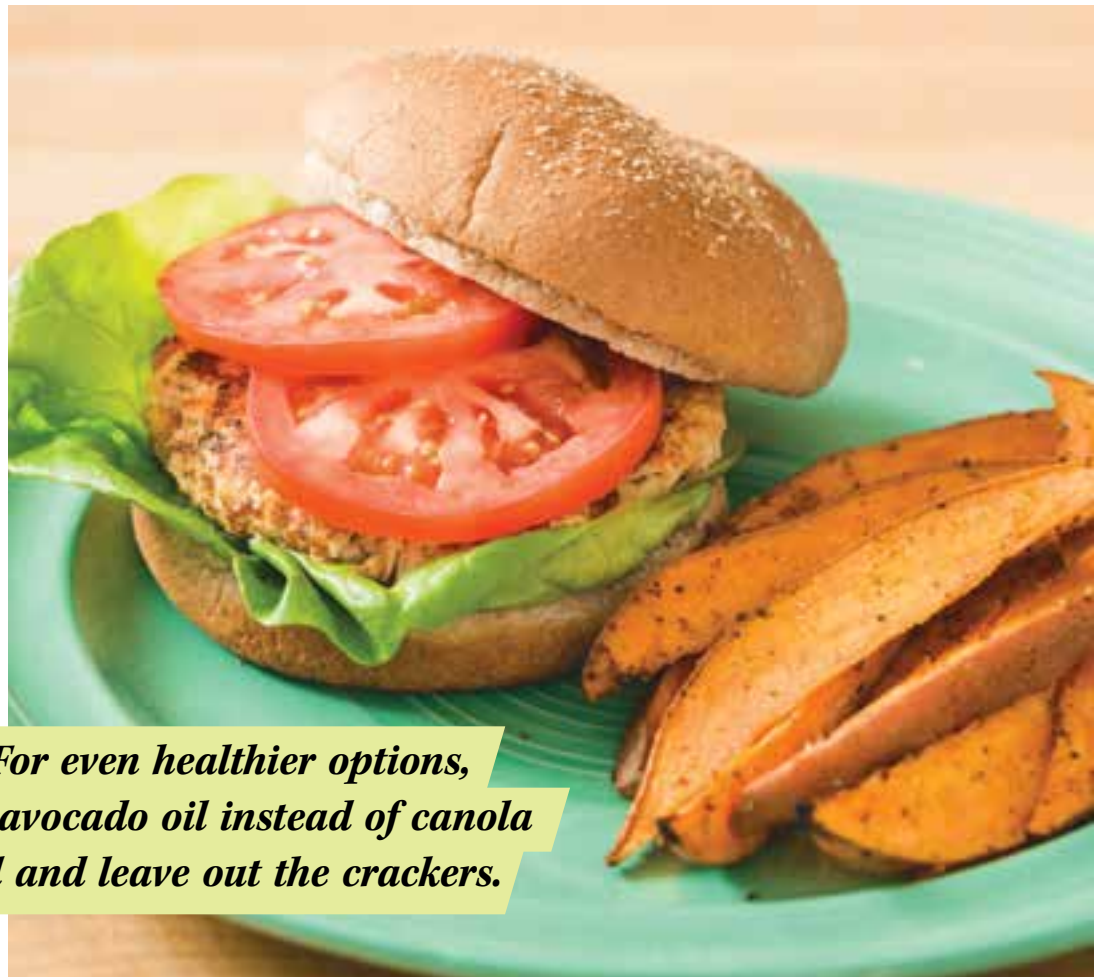
- 4 large sweet potatoes or yams
- 1½ tablespoons canola oil
- 1 tablespoon lemon pepper seasoning blend

### Salmon burgers

- 1 can (14.75 ounces) pink or red salmon
- 2 green onions, chopped
- ½ cup red bell pepper, chopped
- 8 crackers, unsalted tops (saltine-like), crushed
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- Egg whites from 2 eggs, whisked
- 2 tablespoons plain low-fat yogurt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- Cooking spray
- 4 whole-wheat buns
- 2 medium tomatoes, sliced
- 8 leaves Bibb lettuce

## Directions

- Place oven rack in center, and heat oven to 425 degrees.
- Wash and scrub sweet potatoes, and slice into wedges, lengthwise.
- In a large bowl, toss potato wedges with canola oil and seasoning blend.
- Spread potato wedges on cookie sheet. Roast in the oven, turning occasionally, until tender and golden brown, about 30 to 40 minutes.



*For even healthier options, use avocado oil instead of canola oil and leave out the crackers.*

- While sweet potatoes are roasting, prepare salmon burgers. Drain salmon. Place in a medium mixing bowl, and flake.
- Fold in green onions, red pepper, crushed crackers, lemon juice, egg whites, yogurt and ground black pepper.
- Shape into 4 patties.

- Coat large nonstick skillet lightly with cooking spray, and heat.
- Cook salmon burgers until golden brown, turn and continue cooking until other side is golden brown.
- Serve burgers on whole-wheat buns with sliced tomatoes and lettuce and sweet potato oven fries.