

## Hot tips for outdoor living

Here are a few ideas to help everyone enjoy summer fun in comfort and safety.

- Make sure to wear sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15.
- Some prescription drugs can make you more sensitive to the sun, so check with your pharmacist to see if any of your medications could have that effect. One example is Tetracycline.
- If you do get a burn, apply topical analgesics to soothe the skin. Remember to keep skin moisturized to relieve dryness.
- Some old-fashioned remedies for sunburns include sponging the area with cold tea, rubbing on a paste of cornstarch and water, or applying a slice of raw potato. As well, don't forget the juice from the leaf of an aloe plant – the older the plant, the better.
- A couple of ASA tablets every four hours will also help reduce pain and inflammation from sunburn.
- Drink plenty of fluids while working out of doors. Water is the best drink to keep dehydration from becoming a problem. Remember, thirst means you have already started to dehydrate, so keep the liquids flowing even before your body craves them.
- Our summers seem to be getting hotter so it pays to be aware of the symptoms of heat exhaustion. They include dizziness, nausea, rapid breathing and pulse, and faintness. If you or anyone else shows these signs, lie down in a cool spot, loosen clothing and drink lots of cold water.
- Pets can suffer from heat exhaustion or heatstroke as well, so make sure that dogs and cats who like the out of doors are provided with plenty of shade and water on hot days.
- Don't forget that butterflies and birds need water too. A birdbath or small circulating fountain offers them a refreshing drink.
- Light-coloured clothing will discourage bees from coming your way.
- For bee or wasp stings, try applying some witch hazel to cool the sting. Ice will also work.
- A little toothpaste on an unscratched mosquito bite will help to cut down on the itching.
- If your skateboarding kids end up with skinned knees, cleanup is easier with warm or cool water rather than hot. Hot water makes blood coagulate so it's harder to remove.
- When it's time to remove the bandages from those skinned knees, a little rubbing alcohol or baby oil will help loosen the tape.
- Now that we've covered ways to keep the family safe and handle minor summer mishaps, what about some fun? We highly recommend that you turn on the sprinkler, put on your bathing suit and do like the kids – go for a refreshing, fun-filled run through the water. 🌿