Spring and Summer Outdoor Safety Tips

Spring is here and it's a good time to be outside enjoying the weather. Here are some ways to help keep you and your loved ones healthy.

1. Beware and aware of BUGS!
Mosquitos, ticks, and fleas transmit diseases. Use appropriate insect repellent. Avoid tick infested areas such as high grass or thick brush. Shower as soon as possible after coming indoors and check your body for ticks. Check your children. Wash and tumble dry clothing. Check pets for ticks. Consult your health care provider if you or a family member develops fever, rash, body aches, headache, stiff neck, fatigue or disorientation after a tick bite. Typically these symptoms occur in the first three weeks after a tick bite.

2. Grilling out?
Use a meat thermometer to make sure meats are cooked thoroughly. Place cooked meat on a clean platter not back on the one that held raw meats. Wash hands, kitchen utensils and any surfaces that have been in contact with raw meats as soon as possible. Good rule: Keep HOT foods HOT and COLD foods COLD.

3. In the SUN....
Do your part to protect yourself and your family from illnesses that are transmitted when participating in recreational water activities. Do not swim if you have diarrhea, do not swallow pool water, wash your hands frequently. Avoid being directly in the sun during the hottest time of the day. Use sunscreen at least SPF 15, cover skin with clothing and wear a wide brimmed hat. Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes (UVA and UVB rays). Always be aware of signs of heat stress.

4. Spending time with Nature....
Drinking stream water even though it looks clear is risky business. Clear doesn't mean safe. Cryptosporidium and Giardia are parasites that inhabit water. They are not visible and can cause significant illness. Always filter or treat water to make it safe for drinking. Protect yourself from mosquitos, ticks and other insects by using an appropriate repellant. Check yourself daily for ticks. Ticks should be carefully removed. Bats enjoy the night life. Bats are a common sight at dusk when camping. Remind children to never touch a bat. Bats may be infected with rabies. If bitten, wash the area well and seek immediate medical attention.

Have a healthy Spring!

Reference: CDC.gov