

Top Experts Weigh in on How to Look and Feel Well During the Sunshine Season

Summer Beauty, Health, and Fitness Dilemmas

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Top experts share tips on how to sidestep some top seasonal ailments so you can savor your summer days.

Food Borne Illnesses

It's the season for picnics and BBQs, but eating outdoors in extreme heat presents a food safety challenge. Bacteria in food multiply faster at temperatures between 40°F and 140°F, so summer heat increases the risks of food-borne illnesses exponentially. Here are some tips from **Franci Cohen, certified nutritionist in New York City**, to ensure safe bacteria-free eating this summer!

*Wash hands when handling any food, but particularly when handling raw fish, meat and poultry.

*Do not use a plate that has had raw meat/fish on it, until it has been thoroughly washed with soap.

*When marinating raw meats, discard any unused marinade. Do not refrigerate for later use.

*Cook foods completely. Summer is not the not time to be experimenting with sushi or rare meats when eating outdoors. Meat should be cooked to 160 degrees Fahrenheit, and poultry should be cooked to 165.

*Always refrigerate leftovers as soon as possible-within 2 hours is best. In heat of 90 degrees or more, cooked food should be refrigerated within an hour of serving.

Staying Cool While Exercising Outdoors

The outdoors and exercise seem to go together especially in the summer but heat and exercise can potentially be dangerous to your health. "Exercising outdoors in the heat should be approached with caution and planning," advises Franci Cohen, personal trainer, exercise physiologist and certified nutritionist in New York City. If you exercise outside in hot weather, use these common-sense precautions to prevent heat-related illnesses.

*Stay hydrated! Drink water before, during, and after your workout to avoid dehydration. Preventing dehydration is much healthier, and a more prudent approach (to exercising in the heat), than treating dehydration after the fact. Bring along a water bottle, water belt, or other hydration pack such as a camelback, and sip periodically throughout your workout.

*Ease into hot outdoor workouts, and don't push yourself too hard too quick! The excitement and happiness that come along with beautiful weather, can often drive us to push real hard real fast. In an uncontrolled environment with high heat and humidity, this can be a deadly combination. Exercise for less time and at a lower intensity then gradually build up to longer, harder workouts. Listen to your body, and don't be afraid to take breaks if you need to.

*Try to maneuver your schedule, so that you can exercise outdoors during cooler times of the day. Early mornings or late evenings (when the sun is not so strong) tend to be the best.

*Run in shady places like the woods, or breezy places like the beach. Running on congested Manhattan streets mid-day in high-heat is definitely not the way to go.

*Wear light-colored and lightweight clothing that's made from moisture-wicking fabric that will keep moisture away from your skin and dries quickly. Steer clear of black clothing, or shiny metallic leggings, as these will attract heat and raise your body temp to unsafe highs. Avoid cotton t-shirts and shorts since they'll get sweaty, stay damp, and make you feel hotter. Wear wicking socks and lightweight sneakers to keep your feet cool and dry, and to prevent blisters. Finally, wear a moisture-wicking hat that will keep sweat out of your eyes and protect your head and face from the sun, while offering some shade as well.