Did You Know?

The summertime in Louisiana can pose many challenges, including heat related injuries, personal vehicle / recreational / sports / water and outdoor safety.

Summertime Accident Prevention

Heat related injuries are preventable:

- Stay hydrated.
- Avoid heavy meals at lunchtime.
- Maintain a well-balanced diet.
- Wear appropriate clothing for the weather conditions.
- Use sunscreen.
- Maintain adequate work/rest cycles.

Heat injuries ranging from minor to most severe include: sunburn, heat rash, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke.

- Sunburn – Use sunscreen, avoid extended exposure during peak heat hours
- Heat rash – Skin irritation caused by excessive sweating and appears in the form of small blisters or pimples
- Heat cramps – Caused by an excessive loss of salt and is accompanied by painful muscle cramps
- Heat exhaustion – Caused by excessive loss of salt and water and causes severe sweating, headache, paleness, weakness, nausea, cool moist skin and tingling in the extremities.
- Heat stroke – Cause when the heat regulation mechanism fails and is the most severe heat injury illness. All of the symptoms of heat exhaustion can be present in addition to red/hot skin, unconsciousness, and may cause death.
Personal Vehicle Safety (PVS) – Several factors that increase risk include:

- **Age** – The age group from 18 – 24 years are people at highest risk. This age group has a risk of fatal accidents at a rate of 4 times greater than other groups.
- **Seatbelts** – Can prevent 42% of all potentially fatal automobile crashes. The airbag increases survival odds to 47%.
- **Alcohol** – A driver who is intoxicated is 15 times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash. Approximately, 48% of all traffic fatalities involve an intoxicated or impaired person.
- **Fatigue** – The 18 – 24 year age group has a risk factor over 56% of fatalities because of fatigue or falling asleep while driving.
- **Speed** is a contributing factor to driving fatalities. Speed reduces the amount of time a driver has to react and reduces the ability to safely negotiate the road.

Recreational Safety:

- **Start slowly and get in shape.**
- **Choose the exercise appropriate for age and condition.**
- **Always warm up.**
- **Finish with a cool down.**
- **Know your limits.**

**Bicycle Safety**

- **Inspect your bicycle for proper operation.**
- **Wear a helmet.**
- **Inflate tires.**
- **Check brakes.**

**Water Safety**

- **Drownings are the leading cause of death.**
- **Do not drink and swim.**
- **Wear a life preserver when boating.**
- **Know weather conditions.**

**Boating Safety:**
- Be aware of others.
- Avoid alcohol.
- Maintain safe speeds.
Insects and spiders present specific hazards. For most spider bites, the venom is harmless.

- Poisonous Snakes – Treat all snakes as if they are poisonous, most bites are a result of handling or agitation.

- Ticks, Spiders, Scorpions and Insects
  - Identify those that could have allergic reactions to insect bites.
  - Keep an emergency first-aid kit handy.
  - Be aware that food and crumbs attract insects.
  - Use appropriate insect repellant.
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