

SUMMER EXERCISE GUIDE

There's no doubt about it ... **EXERCISE** is good for you! But exercising during the warmer months does require some special consideration. The human body takes between 10 and 14 days to adapt to warmer, more humid temperatures. The Health Department offers the following tips for safe summer exercise:

- ✓ **RE-HYDRATE.** Your body can easily lose up to a quart of water an hour while exercising in hot weather. Drink water before, during and after exercising. Since your body can only absorb 8 ounces of cold water every 20 minutes, continue to drink fluids even after you no longer feel thirsty. Sports drinks - while popular among intense exercisers - are not necessary and are actually absorbed more slowly than plain water. If you prefer the taste of these drinks, dilute them with water before consumption for easier rehydration.



- ✓ **AVOID THE "PEAK" HOURS.** Exercise in the morning or evening to avoid the most intense heat as well as the times when smoggy, ozone levels are highest. Very humid weather hampers perspiration's ability to cool your body: consider exercising indoors at the local YMCA, health club or shopping mall.

- ✓ **WEAR LOOSE FITTING CLOTHING** to allow circulation of air between your skin and the environment. Light colored clothing will reflect sunlight - darker clothing will absorb the heat. While cotton and linen are "natural" fabrics, they will absorb moisture (sweat), synthetic fabrics that have a mesh-like weave will allow moisture to be whisked away from your skin.



- ✓ **WALK!** More than 50 million Americans have made walking their favorite exercise. Invest in a good pair of walking shoes (not slip on canvas sneakers) with flexible soles, and good heel and arch support ... it's the only "equipment" you will need. Gently stretch for 5 minutes before starting your walk. When fitness walking, reduce your pace for the last 5 minutes and gently stretch for another 5 minutes to prevent soreness.



- ✓ **BREAK OUT OF YOUR USUAL EXERCISE ROUTINE.** Try a new exercise or activity every two weeks such as hiking, canoeing, rollerblading or biking ... but don't forget your helmet!

- ✓ **COOL OFF IN THE WATER.** Swimming is an excellent way to exercise when the weather gets hot. While the buoyancy of the water helps support your body weight (making it easier on your joints) it also adds natural resistance that helps tone and strengthen muscles (cool down by walking laps in the pool). You don't need to be a swimmer to benefit from water exercise: doing "doggie paddle" laps at the shallow end of the pool still counts as aerobic exercise.

- ✓ **DON'T FORGET YOUR SUNSCREEN.** Apply SPF 15 sunscreen at least 30 minutes before exercising outdoors. Protect your eyes with sunglasses that block the sun's UV rays since exposure to direct and indirect sunlight over many years increases the risk of developing cataracts.

- ✓ **WATCH OUT FOR HEAT STROKE.** When the body can't rid itself of excess heat, there is a sudden rise in body temperature. Symptoms appear rapidly: look for very hot and dry skin (no sweat), dizziness, nausea, confusion and unconsciousness. Move the person to a cool area, or immerse in/pour cool water over the person to lower the body temperature as quickly as possible. *Seek medical attention immediately: heat stroke can be fatal.*

