



## FROM THE DESK OF THE DDSN MEDICAL CONSULTANT

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## SUMMER 2013

Notes for staff, consumers and members of the SCDDSN Community

Summer is a great time to enjoy the outdoors and many special activities but we do need to plan if we are to have fun and keep ourselves and the people we care for safe. We have noted many of these plans before (see previous notes) but need to keep them in mind.

Heat can be dangerous. Remember not to leave people in a closed car in the sun. Remember to cover up in the sun to reduce sunburn:

- slip on a shirt
- slap on a hat
- slop on sunscreen

When it is hot we sweat to cool our body so please remember to have water to drink for any events where people are in the heat and reduce activity in the high temperature time of the day – get to shade or the A/C.

A cookout and grilling are a favorite activity and pleasure. Plan ahead and keep uncooked and cooked food separate. Wash hands well and often. Keep hot and cold food (see good hints at <http://www.fightbac.org/safe-food-handling>). Remember that caffeine and alcohol can increase the chances of dehydration and please do not mix drinking (alcohol) and driving.

### Summer is the Season for Bugs

Mosquito's bites can be a real nuisance and we know that they can spread some serious diseases, by their bites. So we will try to avoid being bitten.

Mosquito's swarm and are active more at dawn and dusk particularly near standing water, so we are wise to avoid outdoor activities at these times. Insect repellants are useful. They last several hours so apply them following label directions. They do not need reapplying as often as sunscreen so use separate containers.

The EPA recommends that repellants contain one of four chemicals:

- DEET– up to 30% - do not use on children less than 2 months old
- Picardin – also known as KBR 3023 or Bayrepel
- Synthetic oil of Lemon Eucalyptus
  - also known as PMD
  - do not use on children less than 3 years old
- IR3535

Mosquitos are attracted to scents and dark clothes, so do not wear scents and wear light colored clothes to reduce the chance of being bitten.

### Insect Stings

Bees, wasps and hornets can give us a sting that is painful. Remove the sting by scraping with the edge of a credit card, wash and use an ice pack to reduce the swelling and pain.

Some people are allergic to any sting. We need to avoid the stings if possible but be aware that if anyone has increased swelling around the sting with any tingling or swelling in the face, mouth or airways with difficulty breathing then we must get them to an emergency room.

If there is anyone in your group who has had past allergies to sting's we need to have a plan to prevent stings and manage them if this happen. Please check if anyone needs to carry an injectable epinephrine (Epipen or other), and know how to get help (nearest doctor or ER).

These notes are not intended to restrict or discourage normal summer activities. Instead use them to be aware of some things we can do to make summer enjoyable and safe.

Enjoy

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