Keep Summer Fun

Don’t let a picnic in the park or a hike in the hills turn into an evening at the ER.

June 1, 2011 By Katie Karlson

Despite its warm-weather benefits, summer is also a prime time for safety concerns. But you can avoid many of the season’s most common health woes—listed below—by simply being aware and planning ahead, according to Michael Zimring, MD, of Mercy Medical Center in Baltimore.

Dehydration. If you’re fatigued, have dry mouth and experience unusual thirst, get out of the heat and drink water.

Poison ivy. Telltale signs include an itchy rash with blisters. Wash with water or alcohol within 20 minutes of exposure, and treat small areas with topical steroids. For large areas, see a doctor.

Mosquitoes. If you feel skin pain and that area itches, you may have been bitten by mosquitoes. Treat bites with cold compresses, but see a doctor if you have flu-like symptoms.

Foodborne **illness.** Suffering from cramps, diarrhea, nausea and vomiting? Chances are, you may have a foodborne illness. Drink clear liquids, but see a doctor if you can’t keep them down.

Heat stroke. If you experience weakness, confusion, dehydration and a hot feeling, use cold compresses and get to an emergency room immediately.

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