

# Your health this summer

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## Beat the heat

Temperatures during the summer in British Columbia can sometimes exceed 30°C.

We all want to make the most of the beautiful B.C. summers, while staying safe. Learn how you can [beat the heat](#) and stay cool during the warm weather.

If you are spending more time outdoors, you may increase your risk of getting injured from insect bites or extreme heat.

To help you enjoy the summer months, read the information below on taking care of yourself and your family.

## Featured topics

### Food safety

The risk of foodborne illness can increase during the summer. This is because hot and humid weather can create conditions for bacteria to grow and thrive. People can become sick by eating foods contaminated with bacteria or the poisons that bacteria produce. Food safety can be more challenging because we often cook outdoors. Learn how to safely prepare and store your food for summer barbeque, picnic and camping meals:

- [Disinfecting drinking water \(HealthLinkBC File #49b\)](#)
- [Food Safety: Easy ways to make food safer \(HealthLinkBC File #59a\)](#)
- [Home canning – how to avoid botulism \(HealthLinkBC File #22\)](#)
- [First Nations Health Authority: New canning guide offers info on a favourite food preservation method](#)
- [First Nations Health Authority: Safe and healthy foods for family and community gatherings](#)
- [Summer food safety](#)
- [Unpasteurized fruit juices and ciders: a potential health risk \(HealthLinkBC File #72\)](#)

### Insect bites and stings

You may come into contact with insects that bite or sting during the summer. Don't let bugs stop you from enjoying the warm weather. Learn what you can do to prevent being bitten or stung:

- [Insect bites and stings and spider bites](#)
- [Insect repellents and DEET \(HealthLinkBC File #96\)](#)
- [Preventing insect stings](#)

There are many types of ticks. Ticks are small bugs that can bite people and pets and can sometimes [spread diseases](#). A few are known to carry a bacterium that cause Lyme Disease. The BC Centre for Disease Control works in cooperation with local health authorities to monitor for [Lyme disease](#). Ticks found by BC residents can be identified for free by submitting a photo of the tick to eTick. [www.etick.ca](http://www.etick.ca).

## Physical activity

The summer months are a great time for outdoor activities such as camping, hiking and biking. Learn how you and your family can enjoy the outdoors while staying safe and healthy:

- [Canadian Red Cross: 5 ways to stay safe and cool while being active outdoors](#)
- [Health risks in the wilderness \(HealthLinkBC File #24\)](#)
- [Petting zoo and open farm visits \(HealthLinkBC File #61b\)](#)
- [Preventing children's injuries from sports and other activities](#)
- [Quick tips: Staying active in hot weather](#)
- [Exercise and air quality: Staying active during BC's wildfire season](#)

For physical activity or exercise advice, you can call **8-1-1** to speak with a qualified exercise professional between Monday and Friday from 9am to 5pm Pacific Time.

## Sun and heat

One of the best parts about summer are the long, warm days. However, spending too much time in the sun or heat may affect your health if you aren't prepared. Learn how to protect yourself and your family:

- [Beat the heat](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control: Preparing for heat event](#)
- [Canada Safety Council: Hot car warning](#)
- [Fraser Health Authority: Window safety](#)
- [Heat-related illness \(HealthLinkBC File #35\)](#)
- [Heat-related illness in infants and young children \(HealthLinkBC File #35c\)](#)
- [Safety for infants and young children during extreme heat \(HealthLinkBC File # 35b\)](#)
- [Safety for the perinatal population during extreme heat \(HealthLinkBC File #35a\)](#)
- [Sun Safety for Children \(HealthLinkBC File #26\)](#)
- [Sunburn](#)
- [Ultraviolet Radiation \(HealthLinkBC File #11\)](#)

## Swimming and water safety

Taking a dip in a pool, lake, river, or the ocean is a fun and enjoyable way to beat the summer heat. Before you head to the water, remember to check our [public health alerts in your area](#) for local

health authority pool, lake, river, or beach advisories. Learn how to keep yourself and your family safe in and around the water this summer:

- [Child Safety: Drowning Prevention in Pools and Hot Tubs](#)
- [Safety tips for swimmers \(HealthLinkBC File #39\)](#)
- [Swimmer's ear \(Otitis Externa\)](#)
- [Swimmer's itch \(HealthLinkBC File #52\)](#)
- [First Nations Health Authority: Boating safety and awareness](#)

## Travel health

Travel health and safety requirements will vary depending on your destination. For up-to-date travel safety information, go to [travel.gc.ca](http://travel.gc.ca) and [Government of Canada: Well on your way - A Canadian's guide to healthy travel abroad](#).

To learn more about travel, click on the links below.

- [Diabetes: Travel tips](#)
- [Health advice for travellers \(HealthLinkBC File #41a\)](#)
- [Travel during pregnancy](#)
- [Travel immunizations for adults \(HealthLinkBC File #41c\)](#)
- [Travelling with children \(HealthLinkBC #41d\)](#)

## Wildfires

Wildfire season is now in effect. Wildfires, or forest fires, can affect your health and safety. Exposure to air pollution can irritate your lungs, which causes inflammation and can alter your immune response.

- [Wildfires and your health](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control: Wildfire smoke](#)
- [Wildfire: Its effects on drinking water quality \(HealthLinkBC File #49f\)](#)