



**Press Release  
For Immediate Release**

**Media Contact**  
Stephen Kuehler | [stephen.kuehler@knoxfhospital.org](mailto:stephen.kuehler@knoxfhospital.org)  
940-657-3535

## **UV Safety: Tips to Keep in Mind this Summer**

*Knox County Hospital District provides tips to keep you and loved ones safe outdoors.*

KNOX CITY, Texas (July 10, 2020) – If you have wandered outdoors over the past week, you know the summer heat is no joke this year. As triple-digit temperatures kick off in our area, it is more important than ever to protect yourself and loved ones from the strong ultraviolet (UV) rays this summer.

Prolonged unprotected exposure to the sun's harmful UV rays is known to cause more than suntans and sunburns. In fact, increased exposure can damage your skin and eyes, suppress your immune system, and even cause you to develop skin cancer.

With these risks in mind, Knox County Hospital District urges everyone in the community to take essential preventative measures to reduce the onset of heat exhaustion and skin damage.

“Even with Covid-19 and social distancing, summer is certainly a great time to be outdoors,” says Laura Hart, MD, Board Certified in Family Practice Medicine at the Knox City and Munday Clinics. “Between pool time and barbecues or whatever takes you outdoors this summer, I cannot stress enough the importance of taking simple precautions to keep you safe.”

To help you and your loved ones stay healthy outdoors, Knox County Hospital District has provided five tips to keep in mind before going outdoors.

### **Stay indoors when the sun is the strongest.**

Avoiding skin damage and heat exhaustion is easiest if you stay out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. when UV rays and temperatures are at their highest and can do the most damage.

### **Always use sunscreen, not just during the summer.**

UV rays can have a variety of damaging effects on your skin, including aging and cancer. Daily use of sunscreen year-round, SPF 30 or higher, is strongly recommended to protect your skin.

If you plan to spend time at the pool or lake, be sure to choose a water-resistant sunscreen for ultimate protection. Also, do not forget to reapply as suggested on the sunscreen product you choose.

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#### **We sunglasses year-round.**

Just as the use of sunscreen is recommended year-round, sunglasses are also recommended for individuals participating in outdoor activities. Extended periods of sun exposure without eye protection can, over time, lead to a burned cornea or cause cataracts later in life.

Sunglasses with lenses that block 99 to 100 percent of both UVA- and UVB-type rays should be selected. According to Dr. Hart, gray-colored lenses also reduce light intensity and provide more-natural vision.

#### **Choose clothing that can protect your skin and keep your body cool.**

Covering your skin is one of the best ways to protect your skin from harmful UV rays. Fibers with a tight-knit or weave have smaller holes that UV rays cannot get through, thus providing stronger protection for your skin.

When spending time outdoors, Dr. Hart suggests that you choose garments that suit the purpose of the activity. For example, if you are doing yard work outside, wide-brimmed hats and heavy, dark-colored cotton can provide optimum skin protection.

#### **Stay hydrated.**

Sweating acts as a coolant system for your body. This system brings your body temperature down, but it also results in the loss of large amounts of body fluids, leading to dehydration.

Consuming water or sports drinks can help combat exhaustion and keep your body hydrated. It is generally recommended that you stay away from soft drinks, coffee, and alcohol when outdoors. These drinks are known to cause your body to excrete fluids, leading to a faster rate of dehydration.

“Active lifestyles are important year-round, but it is also important to know how to plan ahead to stay safe outdoors – especially as we navigate the Covid-19 pandemic and the Texas summer heat,” Dr. Hart explains. “Whether you’re going for a run or working in the garden, planning can save you much pain and potentially even save your life.”

For more information about protecting yourself outdoors, ask your primary care physician or call visit [www.knoxhospital.org](http://www.knoxhospital.org) to find a medical provider near you.

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#### **About Knox County Hospital District**

Founded in 1926, Knox County Hospital District provides healthcare for residents of Knox County and surrounding areas. The district offers a wealth of medical services, including 24-hour emergency care, advanced radiology services, a clinical laboratory, home health, physical therapy, long-term care, patient education, and more. For additional information, please call 940-657-3535 or visit [www.knoxhospital.org](http://www.knoxhospital.org).

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