



Press Release
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4th of July Weekend: 5 Tips to a Safe and Healthy Holiday

Knox County Hospital District shares important tips to make upcoming holiday weekend safe.

KNOX CITY, Texas (June 21, 2024) – With the Independence Day holiday just around the corner, many Americans will be celebrating with fireworks, food, and fun. No matter how you choose to celebrate the holiday, officials at Knox County Hospital District encourage you to make health and safety a priority.

“Fourth of July is one of my favorite holidays to celebrate as an American, but it can also become a disaster if you or your loved ones don’t celebrate safely,” explains Stephen Kuehler, CEO of Knox County Hospital District. “Making sure we all take essential precautions this coming holiday weekend can make the difference between life and death.”

To promote health and safety, Knox County Hospital District has created five tips that everyone should keep in mind during the upcoming holiday weekend.

Protect yourself from the sun and heat

Texas summers are known for being hot. And it sure seems like things are already heating up in Knox County. No matter the time of day, high temperatures can pose various health risks and strain on your body.

When participating in outdoor activities, remember to always stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water. If you are planning to be very active, such as participating in sports or other vigorous activities, sports drinks with electrolytes might be a great alternative to water.

Fresh fruits and vegetables that contain high water content, such as strawberries, pineapple, watermelon, celery, and iceberg lettuce are all great foods to consume outdoors. They are all packed with lots of water that will help you stay hydrated.

In addition to hydration, using plenty of sunblock outdoors can help protect your skin from sun damage. Typically, sunblock with an SPF of 30 or higher is recommended.

Practice caution at the pool and lakes

Pools and lakes are a great way families keep cool in the summer – especially during holidays. With watersports being among the top pastimes, it is also linked to numerous deaths and injuries.

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It is estimated that more than 4,500 fatal unintentional drownings occur each year in the U.S., with as much as three percent occurring in Texas.

You can avoid a drowning in your family by never swimming alone. Children, especially, should always be supervised when near bodies of water.

Avoid alcohol

Studies show that the Fourth of July Holiday ranks second next to New Year's Eve for alcohol-related traffic accidents. Also, statistics indicate a higher prevalence of driving under the influence in rural versus urban areas.

Nationwide, fatality rates of automobile accidents for both teens and adults were twice as high in rural areas.

The best way to ensure that everyone in your community stays safe is to refrain from alcoholic beverages such as wine, beer, and liquor. If you or a loved one does choose to drink, please do not plan to operate a motor vehicle such as a car or boat.

Handle food properly outdoors

Leaving food outdoors can bring food-borne illness. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration suggests never leaving food out for more than an hour when outdoor temperatures are above 90 degrees Fahrenheit, and more than two hours any other time.

Also, foods that require refrigeration should be placed in a cooler with plenty of ice and freezing packs to hold a temperature of at least 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

Always leave fireworks to the professionals

Fireworks are synonymous with Independence Day, but the thrill and wonder of fireworks can also bring pain and sometimes death if not handled properly.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, 36 percent of fireworks injuries are sustained to hands and fingers, followed by 19 percent equally to eyes and heads/faces/ears. More than 50 percent of injuries are burns.

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Never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks, including sparklers. In addition, it is recommended that individuals opt to enjoy professional fireworks shows.

Kuehler reminds everyone to always call 911 in the event of an emergency. To learn about local healthcare programs and services or to find a provider, please visit www.knoxhospital.org.

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.

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