



## Stay Healthy this Summer

Summer is finally here, and we've certainly been spoilt with soaring temperatures and sunshine!

As lovely as the sunshine is, it can bring some risks, so it's important we take steps to stay healthy and safe all summer long.

Healthy You have got you covered with our ultimate sun-safe tips!

### Sun cream

Make sure you're slathering plenty of this on every 2 hours to prevent burning. When buying sun cream, you should check the label to make sure it has:

- a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 to protect against UVB (UV rays)
- at least 4-star UVA protection (this may also be called broad spectrum on the bottle)

**Healthy You top tip: don't forget to apply to areas like your nose, hands, feet, ears and lips – we're guilty of forgetting these too!**

Make sure the sun cream isn't past its expiry date and do not spend any longer out in the sun than you would without sun cream.

It's also important you don't solely rely on sun cream to protect yourself from the sun. Wear suitable clothing such as long-sleeved tops and hats that shade the face, neck and ears, and spend time in the shade when the sun is at its hottest.

### Stay hydrated

When the weather is hotter, your body needs more fluids. Everyone should aim to drink the recommended amount of 2 litres (or 6-8 cups) of trusty old tap water daily, especially when the sun is making an appearance.

Choose your drinks wisely and try to avoid fizzy drinks or alcohol as these can cause dehydration and are often laden with sugar which may lead to weight gain and tooth decay. You may also want to steer clear of tea and coffee as caffeinated drinks can have a diuretic effect, causing you to lose fluids.

**Healthy You top tip: we know plain old H2O can get boring, so start infusing your water with fruits and herbs such as strawberries and mint to give your water some flavour. If you prefer to stick with what you know, then good old no added sugar diluting juice will also do!**

### Eating well and regularly



Even though a lot of people have not much of an appetite when it's hot, it's important to have some snacks on hand that you can pick at to stay energized. Not eating regularly can result in a drop in your body's blood sugar which will leave you feeling tired and foggy. Combat this with some of these healthy, easy and no-fuss snacks such as:

- Fruit

Not only are fruits the sweetest they've ever been right now, they're also cheap as they're in season. Assemble yourself a fruit salad filled to the brim with your favourite fruits, or have a few whole pieces of fruit to pick at. Fruits like strawberries and watermelon can also help towards hydration levels as they have a high water content.

- Vegetable platters

If you prefer a vegetable salad to a fruit salad, then you can make yourself a platter with your vegetables of choice. Pair it with a sauce like reduced-fat mayonnaise to make it more flavorful and satisfying.

- Smoothies

We're huge smoothie fans here at Healthy You – they're just so fun and versatile! With the abundance of fresh fruit available during summer, it's the best time to make delicious and nutritious smoothies. Pair your favourite fruits (or veg!) to make a glass of fruity goodness - you can also add in some Greek yogurt or protein powder for a protein boost to make it extra filling.

### Keeping cool

We all enjoy basking in the sunshine, however extreme heat can be very dangerous if you aren't prepared.

During the hot weather, it's important to keep your home as cool as possible so you can escape to it when the heat gets too much. Keeping your windows closed during the hottest parts of the days can help to keep the cool air in and hot air out. It may also help to keep any curtains, shutters or blinds closed as these open can make rooms feel hotter. Choose meals that don't require much heat to make such as salads so you aren't creating extra heat in your house.

We know all too well that our sleep is usually disturbed when it's hot out. Try to stick to your usual bedtime routine and when your head finally hits the pillow, ditch the duvet and opt for a thin sheet instead. Some people also find that having a lukewarm or cool shower before bed helps to gradually bring down their body temperature.

And the ultimate cool-down hack is sticking some flannels in the freezer and placing them on your forehead to keep you cool. This also works for pajamas if you struggle sleeping in the heat!



### Keeping active

We know that in the heat exercising is the last thing you want to do, however it's important we try to do what we can to help our physical and mental health. There's strong evidence that people who are active have a lower risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, some cancers, depression and dementia.

The NHS recommends 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise a week, and luckily for us – walking counts towards this amount. Break up your time spent sunbathing or being inactive by walking around your garden/home OR walk to a local beauty spot whilst staying sun-safe.

Summer is often a time where the green fingers come out, and did you know gardening also counts as a form of activity?

You can also try limiting your physical activity to cooler parts of the day such as early morning.

Overall, it doesn't matter what movement you do as long it's something you enjoy and gets you moving. Don't do anything that you don't feel comfortable with and you feel is pushing your limits.

Immediately stop if you start to feel any pain or become lightheaded, and ensure that whatever you do that you have a water bottle near to you and you're staying hydrated.

### Mental health support

Some people find that their mood changes once summer rolls around, and they start to experience more low moods. This can be especially hard when you feel like everyone else around you is having a great time.

If you're not feeling like yourself, talking to someone could help.

Talk to your family or friends, or contact your GP practice if you're struggling with your mental health. Your GP is there to help you – physically and mentally – and can offer you specialist advice.

### Look out for other people

Keep in mind that other people, such as older neighbours, friends and family, may need a bit of extra help over the summer months.

Keep in touch with your neighbours, friends and family and ask if they need any practical help, or if they're feeling under the weather. Make sure they're stocked up with enough food supplies for a few days, in case they find it too hot to leave their house and encourage them to wear light-coloured, loose-fitting clothing which will help to keep them cool, and ensure that if they're spending time in the sun they're regularly applying sun cream.



The heat can have a serious effect on our physical health, and especially during a heatwave, it's important to know and look out for the signs of heatstroke and heat exhaustion.

Heat exhaustion is caused when the body loses excess water, salt and sugars through excessive sweating. It can be treated by drinking plenty of water and staying out of the sun in a cool place to cool down.

Heatstroke happens when the body's temperature becomes dangerously high and the body is no longer able to cool itself. Symptoms may include confusion, headache, nausea and muscle cramps. People suffering from heatstroke may also appear slightly paler than normal and, depending on skin tone, appear to look more grey/yellow-ish. It may be easier to notice this change in colour on the palms of hands and nails.

Heatstroke is extremely serious and can develop with little warning and quickly lead to the person becoming unresponsive. If left untreated, it can be deadly.

If you see somebody and you think they might be suffering from heatstroke, it's vital to cool them down as quickly as possible by wrapping them in a wet sheet or clothing and calling 999.