

June: Home Safety Month

Most Americans feel the safest when they are at home. However, approximately 21 million unintentional injuries occur in American's homes annually. From falls to poisons, there are a lot of potential threats in the home. That is why it is important to take the time to make sure everyone is safe at home.

DID YOU KNOW...?

Windows can be a safety hazard in your home, especially for small children. You should never leave a small child alone around an open window. Window screens are not strong enough to prevent a child from falling through. Window guards are a good idea to keep children from falling out windows, just be sure the window guards have a quick release mechanism for fire safety. Avoid putting furniture against a window in a child's room, which gives them better access to this home danger.



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Spring Clean the Safe Way

As the weather begins to warm up, many of us start thinking about giving our homes an allover cleaning. While having a clean home is important to home safety, a good spring cleaning can often require chemical usage, climbing and lifting heavy objects. These activities can lead to injury, so it's important to take steps to keep you safe while cleaning your home.

Reorganizing a Closet

Spring cleaning often includes reorganizing a closet to make warm weather items more accessible. When you are moving storage boxes from high shelves, make sure you use a ladder or step stool. Never climb on unstable boxes, chairs or shelving that may collapse underneath you. You also want to avoid reaching up too high as you can pull a back or shoulder muscle doing this. You will have better control of your body and the object you are moving if you use a stable step stool.

When sorting and moving boxes or other items, be sure not to leave them on the floor or steps as they create tripping hazards. Make sure to put all boxes and other items away properly.

Moving Furniture

If you are moving furniture or other heavy items, make sure you are using proper lifting techniques. First, make sure you clear a path to move the object. Move all small items, cords and movable rugs out of your way. When lifting, make sure you get the object as close to

your body as possible; you will have more control over the object this way. Your feet should be shoulder width apart, your back straight and bend your knees. Remember you should always lift with your legs, not your back. Avoid twisting or bending when carrying an object and keep your eyes up to keep proper alignment and have a good visual field of your surroundings.

Cleaning Products Safety

Many cleaning products contain chemicals that can be damaging to the skin, lungs or throat. Always read the safety information on the cleaning product you are using and follow its instructions. Wearing protective rubber gloves or a mask might be recommended when using certain products. It may also be a good idea to run a fan or open a window to get better ventilation in a room when using strong cleaning products.

You should never mix household cleaning products together. Mixing products with different chemicals may cause the chemicals to react in a dangerous way, causing harm to you and others around you. If you are using a bucket to hold the cleaning solution, make sure you properly empty and clean the bucket when finished.

After you finish using cleaning products, you should always properly store the items. Lock up objects that may be harmful to pets or children.

DIABETES HEALTH TIPS

According to a recent study published by the Harvard School of Public Health, processed red meat may increase the risk of diabetes. The study found that people who ate at least 1 serving of processed red meat a day, such as bacon, salami or hot dogs, had a 19% higher chance of developing diabetes than those who did not. The study notes that the sodium and nitrate content in processed meats may account for the increased health risk.

DID YOU KNOW...? Grilling Safety

Grilling is a popular summer activity. To enjoy a safe cookout, make sure you keep your grill at least 10 feet away from your home, shrubs, trees and any other objects. Always stay with the grill while using it and make sure you are using the proper starter fluid for your grill. If you are using a gas grill, make sure the connection between the fuel line and the propane tank is not leaking. If a leak is detected, turn off the tank immediately and do not use the grill until it is fixed. Never bring a grill inside your home or garage, and keep small pets and children away from the grill while cooking.



With the increased cost of dining out and the unhealthy choices of dishes at restaurants, many people are cooking meals at home. While this is a great idea for your budget and your waistline, there are some hazards in the kitchen you must be aware of in order to avoid damaging your home or hurting yourself.

Stove and Oven Safety

The stove and oven are great heat sources, so proper caution must be taken when using these appliances. There are many common items that can catch on fire when using the stove, so be on the lookout for anything that is flammable near the stove. Keep dish towels, paper bags and plastic bags at least three feet away from the stove. Also, if you have a window in the kitchen, make sure the curtains are at least 3 feet away from the stove. Make sure the stove and oven are clean before using them to prevent burning of any material or substance left on the appliance. Also, watch out for your own clothes while cooking. If you are wearing long sleeves, make sure you roll the sleeves up to prevent your clothes from making contact with the hot burners. When moving pots, pans and dishes from the stove and oven, always use oven mitts to protect your hands from burns.

If you have children that may be in the kitchen while you are cooking, you need to make sure the kitchen is safe for them. Make sure all pot and pan handles are tuned inward on the stove so a child can not reach them and pull the hot food on themselves. Also, keep any hot items from the oven away from the edges of the counter so a child can not touch the dishes and possibly pour hot food on themselves, causing severe burns. The best safety measure is to keep all children and pets away from the oven and stove while cooking.

When preparing a meal with the stove, never leave the kitchen. Most kitchen fires begin when a person leaves the kitchen while preparing food.

Microwave Safety

Microwaves are easy and quick ways to prepare a meal or snack. However, you need to be careful about the type of materials you put in the microwave. Most plastic, glass, ceramic or paper containers are microwave-safe; however, some plastic containers may begin to melt with the high temperature of the microwave. Be sure to check the container to see if it's microwave safe before using it in the appliance. Also, aluminum and metal should never be placed in a microwave. The microwaves that are generated during cooking are reflected off of the metal causing the food to cook unevenly and damaging the microwave appliance itself.

It is also important to remember that containers used in the microwave become very hot. It is important to remember to wear oven mitts to retrieve the hot items, be careful of steam burns when opening any items from the microwave, and always keep the hot items away from the edge of the counter and out of children's reach.

Other Kitchen Safety Tips

Electrical outlets in the kitchen should be equipped with Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupters (GFCIs). A GFCI is designed to protect people from electric shocks and prevent electric fires. These devices are inexpensive and a qualified electrician can install them in your kitchen outlets to improve your safety.

Proper storage of items in the kitchen is also of importance when it comes to safety. Make sure to store knives and any sharp objects out of children's reach. Store items that you use frequently in the kitchen on a low shelf for easy access, and always use a stable step stool when trying to get an item off of a high shelf. This will prevent unintentional falls in the kitchen.

Finally, always post emergency numbers, such as the fire department and poison control, in a high visibility area of the kitchen.



Caring for an Older Adult

Studies show that older adults want to stay in their own home for as long as possible. In order to keep an older adult safe in their home, some precautions must be taken.

Fall Prevention

Stairs are a common fall hazard for an older adult. If stairs are in the home, make sure sturdy handrails are installed on both sides of the stairs. The stairway should be well lit and kept free of clutter.

The bathroom is another high fall risk area of the home. Bathtubs and showers should be equipped with anti-slip strips or mats. Handrails should be installed in the shower and tub to aid an older adult getting in and out of the shower. A bathmat with a nonslip surface on the bottom should also be used on the bathroom floor. It's easy to trip on rugs that do not have a nonslip surface, so do not use these in the bathroom or anywhere else in the home.

To prevent falls in other areas of the home, make sure all areas of the house are well lit and clutter free. Having sturdy pieces of furniture or hand rails throughout large rooms for an older person to balance with are good ideas. A clear walkway from one room to the other should be created to prevent falls.

Fire Safety

Older adults are twice as likely to be injured in a home fire than the rest of the population. Older adults and their caregivers need to be prepared in case a fire occurs, as well as follow all necessary guidelines to prevent fires.

Working smoke detectors on every floor of the home is essential in fire safety. Smoke detectors should be tested monthly and replace the batteries at least once a year. Smoke detectors over 10 years old should be replaced. If possible, install working fire sprinklers for additional safety.

Make a fire escape plan and post it in a visible area, such as the kitchen refrigerator and the bedroom nightstand as a reminder for the older adult. Make sure phones are located in every room in case they can not escape and need to call for assistance. Emergency numbers should be taped to the telephone for easy reference.

In the cold winter months, space heaters can be a great addition to help warm you. However, they can be a fire hazard. When using a space heater, make sure it is at least 3 feet away from any object in the room. Also, it is important to turn off and unplug a space heater when leaving the room or going to sleep. Have a visual reminder for your older adult that the heater is on to assist with this.

EXERCISE TIP OF THE MONTH

Most Americans are in search of the perfect stomach. Many Americans do a countless number of sit-ups and never see the results that they envision. Spot reducing, or losing fat on one area of the body by doing specific exercises for the area, is a common exercise myth. The truth is your body will lose fat in its own manner which no one can control. So while doing sit-ups are great for abdominal strength, it will not help you lose fat in your stomach area. The best way to burn fat is to consistently perform moderate to high intensity cardiovascular exercise combined as well as full body strength training and to eat a reduced calorie diet.

This Month's Q&A: Ask the Expert

Q: What are the basics for home pool safety?



A: A home pool can be a great way for the family to have fun

and cool off during the hot summer months. However, many accidental drownings occur in home pools as well. An adult should always be present when children are using a pool and they should be watching the activities closely. Even if your children are strong swimmers, activities that they think are fun and playful can be dangerous in a pool, so an

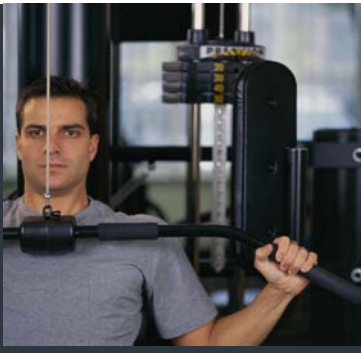
adult should be present to stop any dangerous activities. Younger children and those who are not strong swimmers should have floatation devices with them if in water deeper than 3 feet. A fence should be installed around the pool that is at least 5 feet in height and has a door that closes and latches by itself. Do not leave any outdoor furniture near the fence where a child could climb on it and get over the fence. Always be prepared with rescue equipment, first aid supplies and a working phone with emergency numbers close by in case an emergency occurs while at the

WEBHEALTH Home Safety Month

For more information, contact the Home Safety Council at (202) 330-4900 or through their website at:

www.homesafetycouncil.com





Recipe Corner

Summer Peach and Tomato Salad

A sweet and savory salad that will be a great side to your next barbeque.

Makes 8 1-cup servings

Ingredients

- 1/3 cup thinly sliced red onion
- 3 ripe peaches, pitted and each cut into 8 wedges
- 1/2 lb cherry or pear tomatoes, cut in half
- 1/2 lb beefsteak tomatoes, cut into thick wedges
- 2 tbsp sherry vinegar
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tsp honey
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp ground black pepper
- 1/2 cup (2 ounces) crumbled feta cheese
- 1/4 cup small basil leaves or torn basil

Directions

1. Combine red onion, peaches and tomatoes in a bowl.
2. Combine vinegar, olive oil, honey, salt and pepper in a small bowl, stirring with a whisk.
3. Drizzle vinegar mixture over peach mixture; toss well to coat.
4. Sprinkle with cheese and basil.

Per 1-cup serving: 75 calories, 3.5 g fat, 9.9 g carbohydrates, 6 mg cholesterol, 2.1 g protein, 230 mg sodium



Upcoming Carolina Events

- June 5—Charity Chase Half Marathon & Relay—Hickory, NC
- June 5—Running for Ronald 5K—Charlotte, NC
- June 5—Walk/Run for Seizure Disorder—Greenville, NC
- June 12—Cititan Sun Run 5K—Hendersonville, NC
- June 12—Komen NC Triangle Race for the Cure—Raleigh, NC
- June 12—Lake Wylie Splash Dash 10K/5K Run, 5K Walk—Lake Wylie, SC
- June 19—Greenville Candlelight Charity Run 5K Run, 1M Run/Walk—Greenville, SC
- June 20—Charleston Sprint Triathlon Series—Charleston, SC
- June 29—Tri the Midlands Triathlon—Columbia, SC

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