

# Public Health Spotlight

## Staying Safe in the Sun

### May 2019

In this month's Public Health Briefing we focus on the importance of Staying Safe in the Sun. The summer months provide a fantastic opportunity for people to enjoy the outdoors and become more active. Being more active is great for improving people's physical and mental wellbeing. Across west Cheshire there are lots of places to have fun in the sun safely. This briefing provides some simple but effective messages that I would like you to help promote within your local communities.

Below are some great tips for residents and visitors to help them stay safe in the sun while having fun.

#### Sun Exposure

- The sun is strongest between 11am and 3pm so try to stay in the shade at these times
- Children under 6 months old should never be put in direct sunlight. Using a sunshade or beach tent can be a great way of keeping them out of the sun
- You can burn in the UK even if its cloudy so always wear sunscreen

#### Wear Sunscreen

- Always wear sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 15
- Use a sunscreen with at least 4 star UVA protection
- Apply sun screen at least 30 minutes before you go out in the sun
- Remember to regularly re-apply your sun screen throughout the day

#### Wear protective clothing

- Wear a hat to shade areas such as ears that can burn easily
- Protect your eyes by wearing sunglasses

#### Staying hydrated

- Drink plenty of fluids such as water, diluted fruit juice and squash to stay hydrated
- Under 5s and older people are at increased risk of dehydration so it is important that you help others drink enough fluids
- Peeing little or having very dark yellow pee can be a sign of dehydration
- Water bottles are a great way of keeping track of how much water you or others have had to drink
- Remember to drink extra fluids when you're out in the sun and before and after exercise

#### Water safety

- Follow the guidelines on any safety signs before entering water
- Check to see how easy it is to get out of the water before you enter, things like slimy rocks can make it difficult to get out
- Open waters are often very cold this can cause your body to go into cold shock or hypothermia which can lead to drowning
- Never enter water if you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Never jump off a bridge into water, it is difficult to estimate depth, the water may be much shallower or deeper than you thought
- Supervise children at all times near open waters



### Why is this important?

Sunburn can increase your risk of skin cancer, the 5<sup>th</sup> most common cancer in the UK.

Becoming dehydrated can result in small children needing hospital treatment.

Older people who don't drink enough water are at increased risk of developing urinary tract infections that can spread to the bloodstream causing infections like E.coli. In the UK over 5,500 people die each year from causes related to bloodstream infections.

Around 400 people drown in waters around the UK each year and many of these deaths are preventable.

### Ideas for fun activities to do this summer

#### Go for a Walk

For the third year now we are hosting the west Cheshire Walking Festival. The festival features a wide range of fantastic walks for individuals of all abilities. Copies of the booklet can be picked up from local libraries and leisure centres across the borough or downloaded from

<https://www.activecheshire.org/news/west-cheshires-walking-festival-may-2019/>



#### Visit your local park

Residents and visitors have access to a number of great parks including Winsford Town Park and Grosvenor Park. Visitors can use outdoor gym equipment or go for a walk. For those who want to relax they can enjoy reading a book in the shade of a tree. Parks are also great places to socialise and have a picnic.

#### Go for a bike ride

There are lots of great cycling routes across the area including Delamere Park and Biddulph Valley Way. These are great routes that allow you to cycle away from the roads. Some areas also offer cycle hire for those who don't own a bike.

I would really value your feedback and recommendations for future updates. Please send through your views to [publichealth@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:publichealth@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

Thank you for your continued support.



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