



WELLNESS

Wellness Monthly

Healthy matters to keep in mind.

June 2009

This Month's Topic:

Safe and Sound

Tips to Protect You and Your Family

Did you know that June is National Safety Month? It's the perfect time to take stock of your entire family's surroundings and daily routines. Some of the everyday activities we all enjoy just may put our personal safety at risk. Everyone has his or her own unique set of risks, particularly women and children. These tips can help keep you and your loved ones safe this summer — and all year long.

Alert, Aware and Assertive: Especially for Women

While dangers exist everywhere regardless of gender, some risks are more common to women. From sexual assault to identity theft, there are a wide variety of threats to your personal safety. Fortunately, there are easy steps you can take to help prevent violence or other crimes against you and other members of your family.

Protect Yourself at Home...

- **Keep your home safe and secure.** Install locks on windows and doors, and use them, even if you're away for a few minutes. Don't hide a spare key under a doormat — leave it with a trusted neighbor or friend.
- **Be wary of unexpected visitors.** Don't open the door until you know who's on the other side. Ask delivery or service people for photo identification before you let them in. If you have any doubts, call the company to verify.
- **Consider getting a home-alarm system.**
It can monitor for burglary, fire and medical emergencies.

Protect Yourself When You're Out and About...

- **Use the buddy system whenever possible.** Avoid walking alone, particularly at night. Vary your route and stick to well-traveled, well-lit areas.
- **Keep your money safe.** Carry your purse close to your body, not dangling by the straps. For extra security, keep your wallet in your inside coat or front pants pocket. Avoid carrying credit cards you don't need or large amounts of cash.
- **Use caution in the car.** Drive on well-traveled streets, and keep your windows rolled up and your doors locked. Park in well-lit areas, as close to the entrance as possible.

Never hitchhike or pick up a hitchhiker. And, keep your car in good working order with plenty of gas in the tank.

- **Take control.** Be aware of your surroundings, and walk with confidence. Don't let anyone violate your space. Make smart choices — don't let alcohol or other substances impair your judgment.

Protect Your Identity...

- **Be careful when giving out personal information.** Unless you initiated contact or know the person or company you're dealing with, don't share your information over the phone, through the mail or online.

- **Just shred it.** When you're ready to discard documents, such as bank statements, pre-approved credit offers or insurance forms, shred them instead.

- **Keep passwords top secret.** Be creative when setting up a new online password. Avoid using your mother's maiden name, your birth date or the last four digits of your Social Security number.

- **Monitor your credit.** Before you enter your credit card number online, make sure the Web site is secure. Order a copy of your credit report every year, and correct all mistakes with the credit bureau.

Take Note

Domestic violence at home is one of the most common forms of danger to women. Physical or sexual abuse by an intimate partner is reported by about one.

Summer Surfing Protection

Though your children may suspect you have eyes in the back of your head, it's nearly impossible to watch for every risk out there. And, the Internet is no different. Online predators and bullies are a growing danger to kids. These tips can help make web surfing safer for your children.

- **Set rules.** Ask your children not to trade personal photographs, reveal personal information or agree to meet any "online friends" without parental supervision.

- **Get involved.** Keep the computer in a common area such as the living room. Share an e-mail account with your child, so you can monitor communication. Bookmark favorite sites for easy access. And, spend time together online.

- **Set up online tools.** Your Internet service provider may offer parent-control options to block certain material. There also are programs that monitor your child's activity.

- **Consider software** that help block your child's access to inappropriate sites. Filtering programs can block certain sites and restrict your child's personal information from being sent online. Additionally, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act requires that Web sites include privacy policies and get parental consent before collecting or using a child's personal information. Above all, the best online protection is you. Talk with your kids about Internet safety. Let them know they can — and should — always come to you if they feel threatened, offended or confused.

Summer Baby Safety at Home - and on the Go:

As a parent, you do your best to do your best to keep your little ones safe. These reminders can help:

- When outside, dress your baby in long sleeves and pants to avoid bug bites. Insect repellents containing DEET should not be applied to infants younger than age 2 months.
- Choose toys wisely — watch out for choking hazards.
- Keep your baby well-hydrated and cool during extreme heat and humidity. Young children are at a greater risk for heat-related problems like heatstroke.
- Never leave a baby unattended near a pool or other body of water.
- In the car, make sure the child safety seat is the right size for your baby and installed properly. Keep infants rear-facing until a minimum of age 1 and at least 20 pounds. Keep your baby well-hydrated and cool during extreme heat and humidity. Young children are at a greater risk for heat-related problems like heatstroke.
- Never leave a baby unattended near a pool or other body of water.
- In the car, make sure the child safety seat is the right size for your baby and installed properly. Keep infants rear-facing until a 20 pounds.

Resources:

Use the search phrase “children’s safety” to learn more about protecting your child online, choosing safe products, traveling with kids. Use the search phrase “violence against women” to learn more about domestic violence and sexual assault. The information and therapeutic approaches in this article are provided for educational purposes only and are not meant to be used in place of professional clinical consultations for individual health needs. Certain treatments may not be covered in some benefit plans. Check your health plan regarding your coverage of services.

Sources: HealthDay
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Employee Assistance Program (EAP): United Behavioral Health (UBH)

Toll-free number: 1-866-248-4105 (7 days/24 hours)
Access code: 61570
www.liveandworkwell.com

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