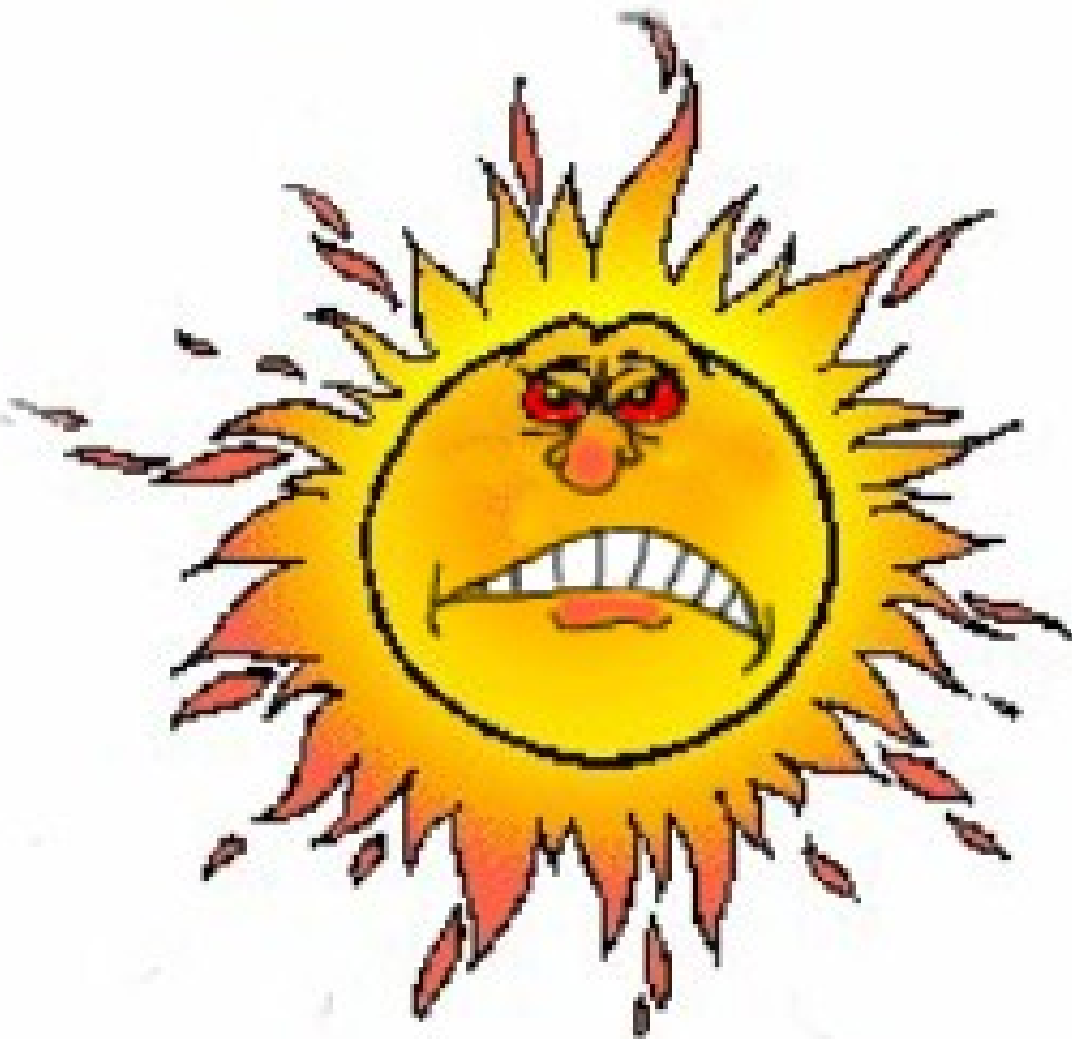


Seniors deserve to enjoy summers at least as much as their grandkids. But they can't spend hours and hours baking on the beach, bareheaded while climbing mountains or sunning in the back yard. Older people are more vulnerable than younger people to many summer problems, including sunburn, skin cancer, heat stroke, dehydration, infections and summer colds.

Here are some suggestions that will help older vacationers stay healthy:

1. Keep your exposure to the direct sun to just 15 minutes at a time, and no more than three or four times during each day. Protect your eyes with dark sun glasses and your skin with effective lotions.



2. If you're hiking, sailboating or on a cruise, and must spend hours in direct sunlight, wear protective clothing and a cap or hat with pull-down brims. And keep slathering on the lotion at least once per hour of exposure.
3. For you and everyone with you on each vacation day, take along an effective first-aid kit. There should be a good supply of throw-away medicated hand wipes with it for use before eating, in public bathrooms and after handling any dirty items. The kit should have the usual needs, such as band-aids, liquid disinfectants, antibiotics and all necessary over-the-counter and prescription drugs
4. Keep close to you cell phones with auto-dial numbers to 911, family, physicians and other frequent contacts. On hikes, especially with younger companions, each should have a cell phone in case someone should go wandering off and get lost.
5. On hikes, rock-climbing, sailing, canoe and backpack types of trips, keep in constant touch with home folks by cell phone. If you have a digital camera or camera phone, send back instant photos for them to enjoy as your adventures happen.
6. Don't overdo it. As with exposure to the sun, keep your physical activities within your ability to do them. Just because a grandchild wants you to ride on that roller coaster or dive off the 50-foot pool tower doesn't mean they're challenges you must accept. On hikes, take at least one 10-minute break out of each hour. In spite of your youthful appearance, at least in your opinion, you just ain't as young as you once was.
7. Speaking of not being as young as you feel, go very easy on eating and drinking when you're out in the sun all day. Maybe several decades ago you could scarf down a dozen hot dogs at one sitting, but your stomach will be very insulted if you tried it now. If you're wandering among street stalls in an unfamiliar country, don't be tempted to try the raw, or even most cooked food. In those areas, drink only pre-sealed bottled water. Go easy on the booze or beer while out in the sun, because they could make your stomach and brain go astray. Use medicated wipes before eating and after getting your hands and face dirty on other occasions.

Just take those very simple precautions and your vacation day in the sun will be a happy, healthy one.