

## Living Responsibly...It's Only Natural!

Sheryl Eaglewoman

Welcome! This week's topic is "Surviving the summer". As much as most of us love it, we really need to be aware of the amount of exposure to the sun, wind and heat we receive. First, in support of the Sun...we need sunlight. It is a major factor in encouraging cell communication, an extremely important factor in an efficient running body. It also provides raw material for the body to produce the active form of Vitamin D, an essential nutrient. This active form of Vitamin D has many benefits in the body, including the prevention of cancer and other autoimmune diseases and conditions like osteoporosis. Vitamin D in supplement form can not mimic the effects of Vitamin D produced by the body from sunlight. You should be able to get enough Vitamin D production from only 15 – 30 minutes of sunlight daily. Sunlight also has a positive, essential effect on the pituitary gland, the regulator of cycles and rhythms in the body. Without regular exposure to the sun your moods will be affected as well. We've all heard of "Seasonal Mood Disorders" and most of us know someone who just has a hard time making it through the short days of winter, displaying symptoms from low energy to signs of low esteem. So, knowing we really do need sunlight as an incredibly important nutrient in our diet, how do we not overdo it? Start by trying to get your sunlight early or late in the day instead of right smack dab in the middle of it. Second, wear a light hat, straw maybe, to filter the sun somewhat and keep the direct sun and accompanying heat off the head and away from the face. Wear light colored clothing and always, natural fabric. If exercising or working hard during the heat of the day, wear something with "wicking" to pull the sweat and moisture away from the body. This type of clothing can be found at sporting good stores such as REI and Sportsman & Ski Haus. What if you want to tan or just be out in the sun, gardening, swimming or kayaking? Then you need sunscreen. Which one, you ask? There are so many to choose from. Of course, I choose the natural ones, without petroleum and so many other extra chemicals and scents. It needs to protect from UVA and UVB rays. I also like a zinc or mineral base like titanium dioxide. My personal favorite is All Terrain Sunscreen. It comes in a water sport form (Aqua Sport) and a land sport formula (Terra Sport). It has a zinc base and lasts for hours, even when floating in the water. They also make a product that combines sunscreen with insect repellent, deet free of course. And, as expected, they have formulas for kids as well. Other brands I like are Alba, California Baby and Aubrey. I personally use a 15 SPF because I tan easily. 30 SPF is available in "clean" formulas as well. Remember, whenever we are exposed to the sun, we need to increase our water intake. Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate!! And that means water, even if a cold beer is what we really desire. Have the beer, after the water. And to increase the natural melanin in the skin, a daily dose of 500 mg of the B vitamin, PABA, will be beneficial.

The wind is a sure way to burn and ruin the skin. Again, protective clothing is a must. Use petroleum free skin care products to protect the skin. One favorite is All Terrain's WeatherShield with a SPF of 30. It is formulated specifically to protect from the drying effects of the sun and wind. And what's better than enjoying the environment while using a product from a company that promotes environmental conservation and respect. Once again hydration of the body is a must. Use lotions, oils or creams to moisturize the skin daily. Taking flax or fish oil daily will also help with keeping the skin moisturized and healthy. And of course, water, water, water.

And the heat, it isn't going anywhere for a while. It is absolutely imperative to keep the body hydrated. Keep the head covered if in the sun. Use wet cloths around the neck or forehead to refresh oneself. Try to keep in the shade as much as possible. Again, hydrate, hydrate, hydrate! Remember, cooling foods such as watermelon, cantaloupe, grapes, and cucumber are all beneficial as well. Have a salad instead of a heavy protein. Be easy on the caffeine intake. It can be very dehydrating.

Remember, while yes it can be uncomfortably hot in the summer; respect the environment in regards to using your air conditioner. This means, turn off your car when parked. Please don't let it sit idling, burning gas and heating the atmosphere. And lest we forget, remember to give ample water to our animal friends. I leave a bucket of water in my yard for my dogs, but I leave a somewhat large stick in it so that insects can crawl down to the water without falling in and drowning. Remember the birds as well. A place for them to wash and cool off is a must!

Enjoy the summer. It will be over soon enough. Make it fun by protecting oneself and one's family and pet friends with clean water, clean sunscreens and good clean cooling foods, and then, the organic beer and ice cream. Can we say patio party? Count me in.

Question of the week: Why do people drink “green drinks” and what exactly are they?

Answer: A “green drink” is usually a blend of different types of grasses such as barley or wheat and / or a blend of foods and grasses, formulated to provide a high level of antioxidant activity. The chlorophyll and the antioxidant activity are extremely beneficial for removing toxins and free radicals (molecules that can attach themselves to organs and tissue causing damage) from the body.

Have a question you'd like to see addressed by Sheryl Eaglewoman? E-mail your question to [sheryleaglewoman@livingresponsibly.com](mailto:sheryleaglewoman@livingresponsibly.com) for “The Question of the Week”.

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