



Summer Safety

For further information about how you can enjoy your summer whilst ensuring you stay safe and well, visit the [NHS Live-well summer webpage](#).

Sun safety

Unprotected exposure to the sun can lead to burns and premature ageing of skin. It can also lead to skin cancer and cause damage to your eyes.

Avoiding sunburn when young can reduce the chances of developing melanoma by as much as 78%¹.

Here are some tips to help you stay safe in the sun:

- Spend time in the shade between 11am and 3pm.
- Make sure you don't burn – use sunscreen and reapply after swimming.
- Use a t-shirt, hat and sunglasses to cover up.
- Use a sunscreen that is at least factor 15+.
- Take extra care with children and use a higher factor sunscreen.

What sun protection factor (SPF) should I use?

Use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15. The higher the SPF the better. Go for broad-spectrum sunscreens, which protect against harmful UVA and UVB rays. Make sure the product is not past its expiry date. Most sunscreens have a shelf life of two to three years.

What is broad spectrum and the star-rating?

Broad-spectrum products provide protection against the sun's UVB and UVA rays. The sun protection factor, or SPF, is a measurement of the amount of UVB protection. The higher the number, the greater the protection. In the UK, UVA protection is measured with a star rating. Sunscreens has from 0 to 5 stars. The higher the number of stars, the greater the protection.

What should I look for in sunglasses?

Sunglasses can also offer protection, but not all of them are adequate. When you're shopping for sunglasses, choose a pair that has one of the following:

- the CE Mark and British Standard (BS EN ISO 12312-1:2013)
- a UV 400 label
- a statement that the sunglasses offer 100% UV protection

What about the need for Vitamin D?

Sunlight does help the skin on our body to produce vitamin D, which helps keep our bones healthy. Although you should not sunbathe to increase your vitamin D levels, small amounts of incidental sunlight, as you might get through your daily activities, may help to boost your vitamin D levels.

If you are at high risk of skin cancer, you should make protecting your skin in the sun a priority, and look to get as much vitamin D as possible from other sources, such as your diet and supplements, rather than placing yourself at higher risk from skin cancer. To find out if you are at increased risk from developing skin cancer and for further advice visit the [NHS Choices webpage](#)

Heatwave

If a heatwave hits this summer, make sure the hot weather doesn't harm you or anyone you know.

The very young, the elderly and the seriously ill are the groups who are particularly at risk of health problems when the weather is very hot. In particular, very hot weather can make heart and breathing problems worse.

Many prescription medicines can reduce your tolerance of heat. You should keep taking your medicines, but take extra care to keep cool.



Why is a heatwave a problem?

The main risks posed by a heatwave are:

- Dehydration (not having enough water).
- Overheating, which can make symptoms worse for people who already have problems with their heart or breathing.
- Heat exhaustion.
- Heat stroke

Here are some tips for keeping cool and well in the hot weather:

- Keep rooms cool by shutting windows and closing curtains/blinds during the day. Open windows for ventilation when it is cooler if it is safe to do so.
- Stay out of the sun when it is really hot.
- Wear loose, cool clothing, and a hat if you go outdoors. Sunscreen and sunglasses will also help to protect you from the sun.
- Have cool baths or showers, and splash your-self with cool water.
- Drink cold drinks regularly, such as water and fruit juice. Avoid tea, coffee and alcohol as these can dehydrate you.
- Stay tuned to the weather forecast on the radio or TV, or on the [Met Office website](#).
- Plan ahead to make sure you have enough supplies, such as food, water and any medications you need – medications also need to be kept cool too.

- Do not leave people who are vulnerable to very hot weather (very young babies or children or very old people) alone in a parked car.
- Check up on friends, relatives and neighbours who may be less able to look after themselves.

Danger symptoms to watch out for in hot weather include: feeling faint and dizzy, short of breath, vomiting or increasing confusion. Take immediate action if danger symptoms of heatstroke are present:

- Cool down as quickly as possible.
- Do not take aspirin or paracetamol – this can make you worse. Do carry on taking all other prescribed medicines.
- Seek medical advice from NHS 111, a doctor, or ring 999 if the person has collapsed.

Summer safety for younger children

Keep the fun in summer by keeping your child safe in the sun, the water, and the great outdoors.

Here are some tips to ensure your children can run around and have fun safely:

- Always take special care of children's skin to avoid sunburn and heat exhaustion; use sunscreen, a floppy hat with a wide brim that shades their face and neck, and encourage your child to play in the shade.
- Use at least a factor 15 sunscreen and choose a broad-spectrum brand that has a four- or five-star rating. Choose sunscreens that are formulated for children and babies' skin, as these are less likely to irritate their skin. If your child has eczema, put on your child's emollient and steroids first then put the sun protection cream on 30 minutes later.
- Do not leave babies or children alone in a parked car when it is hot.
- Be safe around water; ask if there is a lifeguard on duty, read the water safety information signs, ask if there are any dangerous currents or tides at the beach, and out where the safest area is to swim.
- Consider taking a short (one or two-hour) course in first aid and the key things to know in an emergency. You can find a first aid course in your area by searching the web.
- Enroll your children in swimming lessons so they can have fun more safely.



The Council's leisure centres provide **swimming lessons** for children (and adults) across Bath and North East Somerset. You can also find out about other swimming classes by searching the web.

Find out what you can do this summer in Bath and North East Somerset with the family by visiting websites such as **Visit Bath**.

Be “Tick aware”

Enjoy the great outdoors with the knowledge and confidence on how to avoid and manage tick bites.

Ticks are small spider-like creatures which feed on the blood of animals and people and are often found in dense vegetation or long grass, but can also be found in woodlands, grasslands, moorland and some urban parks and gardens.

Ticks don't jump or fly, but wait on vegetation and climb on animals or people. They then bite to attach to the skin and start to feed on the blood. The bite doesn't really hurt, but certain types of tick can transmit a condition called Lyme disease. Therefore, remove a tick as soon as you spot one on your skin.

Tips to avoid being bitten:

Wear long sleeves and trousers when you're walking in forested, overgrown areas and use a tick repellent.

Tips to safely remove a tick:

The safest way of removing a tick is using a fine pair of tweezers or a tick removal tool. Grasp the tick as close to the head as possible. Pull firmly upwards if using a pair of tweezers. If using a tick removal tool, you also need to use a twisting motion. After removing the tick clean the bite area with an antiseptic wipe.

Keep an eye on the area for several weeks in case a rash develops, which may be a sign of Lyme disease.

Be aware of the symptoms of Lyme Disease:

Symptoms can include:

- A slowly expanding circular reddish rash,
- flu-like feeling,
- fatigue,
- muscle and joint pain.

If you develop any of these symptoms, visit your GP and remember to tell them you have been bitten by a tick.

Help us record ticks:

Send any ticks you collect to Public Health England and they'll identify them for you. Find out more about [Public Health England's Tick Recording Scheme](#).

Find out about walks in Bath by visiting websites such as [Visit Bath](#), [Outdoors West](#), and the [Ramblers Association](#).



Preventing and managing hay fever

Hay fever affects around one in four people in the UK. It is very difficult to completely avoid pollen. However, reducing your exposure to the substances that trigger your hay fever should ease your symptoms.

The main triggers of hay fever are tree and grass pollen. The pollen count is always higher on hot, dry days.



Tips on reducing your exposure to pollen:

- Don't mow your lawn when the pollen count is high; ask someone else if they could mow it for you, or wait until the pollen count is low..
- Create a barrier; smear a nasal barrier balm inside your nostrils, or use a drug-free nasal spray or dab of petroleum jelly (such as Vaseline) to prevent pollen sticking to the lining of your nose. Ask your pharmacist about nasal barrier balms and nasal sprays.
- Time it right; If possible, avoid outside activity when the air is warming up and cooling down as pollen count is highest at these times, around 8-10am and 5-7pm.
- Shut the windows: don't drive with the windows open, as this will allow pollen to come in. Open bedroom windows at night, but close them when you get up in the morning.
- Damp dust regularly; dusting with a damp or microfibre cloth will collect dust and stop any pollen from becoming airborne.
- Wash your hair; pollen is sticky and may be in your hair.
- Wear wraparound sunglasses to stop pollen getting in your eyes.
- Vacuum; pollen can live in carpet, so make sure you vacuum regularly.

Think about your medication:

Talk to your GP or pharmacist about your hay fever, if your symptoms are not controlled by your current treatment.

Non-sedating antihistamines may be adequate for mild or intermittent hay fever symptoms, but many people will need to use a steroid nasal spray (available from a pharmacy or prescribed by a GP) to treat the inflammation in the nose caused by hay fever.

Starting treatment before symptoms start will also ensure the medication is in your system when pollen triggers your hay fever.

For further information on how to keep well and safe this summer use the following links:

NHS Live-well summer webpage: Information on summer health issues from how to barbeque food safety, to safe swimming, and safer sex on holiday.

Met office Out and About

Met Office: check the weather

Met Office: check the pollen count

Met Office: check today's UV levels

Age UK: keeping cool in a heatwave

Cancer Research SunSmart

Public Health England: Further information on ticks.

Details of Public Health programmes such as drinking, substance misuse, and sexual health services can be found on the **B&NES Council Public Health** webpages.

ⁱ Outdoor Kids Sun Safety Code: <http://oksunsafetycode.com/about-us/ok-sun-facts>