

Three strategies to beat the summer heat

The dog days of summer can be challenging. As the mercury rises to potentially unhealthy heights, spending time outdoors can become less comfortable and even dangerous.

Finding ways to beat the summer heat can help people avoid injury and illness and ensure they still get to enjoy their summers. The following are three ways to beat the summer heat, though it's important that seniors, pregnant women, parents of young children, and anyone with a preexisting health condition speak with their physicians about the precautions they should take before going outside on hot days.



1. Change your exercise routine, if necessary. Summer is a great time to exercise outdoors. However, it's important that people who are used to working out in midday change their outdoor exercise routines on hot days. Members of the Miami-based Bikila Athletic Club provide a list of tips to new members who may be unaccustomed to the Florida heat and humidity. One of those tips recommends training early in the morning before the sun gets too high. During the dog days of summer, early morning temperatures tend to be more mild than midday temperatures. That can reduce athletes' risk of injury or illness, though it's still important to avoid exercising in especially hot temperatures regardless of the time of day.

2. Practice passive cooling at night. Nightflushing is a passive cooling technique that involves opening the windows in a home at night. Doing so can make indoor areas healthier and more comfortable for a home's inhabitants during the dog days of summer. HVAC systems keep homes cool in summer, but over time hot and stale air can accumulate inside a home. If that air is not removed, a home can feel stuffy and airborne pollutants like carbon dioxide can reach potentially unhealthy levels. By opening their windows at night, homeowners can let that stale, potentially unhealthy air out and let the cool air of summer evenings in.

3. Stay hydrated. It's easy to become dehydrated at any time of year, but especially so during the dog days of summer. The U.S. National Library of Medicine notes that the human body needs an average of three quarts of water per day on a normal day. However, conditions on mid- to late-summer days make it necessary for many people to consume more water than that, especially if they plan to spend time outdoors. On hot days, make sure you're taking in more fluids than you're losing. Take water with you when going outside, and be sure to rehydrate with more water when going back indoors.

Golfing in the era of social distancing

Golfers enthusiastically look forward to the day when their favorite courses reopen to players each year. That anticipation was even greater in 2020, when social distancing measures forced many courses to stay closed even as the weather warmed up. Thankfully for golfers, golf courses were among the first businesses given the green light to reopen as governments began to lift restrictions.

Golfing in the era of social distancing may not be quite the same as it was prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, but golfers can still have fun as they hit the links. That's especially true when they take steps to understand just what it means to golf while social distancing prior to teeing off.

¥ Assess your personal health before going to the golf course. Golf attracts athletes from all age groups, including some that are more vulnerable to COVID-19 than others. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, age is a risk factor for COVID-19, as older adults are more vul-

nerable to severe illness if they are infected with the virus than younger adults. Social distancing requires a collective effort on the part of everyone to keep



vulnerable people safe, and golfers are no exception. Golfers young and old who are under the weather or experiencing even mild symptoms of COVID-19 should avoid golf courses until they feel better. In addition, young golfers can choose tee times when they're less likely to come into contact with older golfers. Early morning tee times tend to be popular among older golfers, but speak with staff at the course to see if they have rules in place to safeguard older

golfers. If they do, respect those rules. If they don't, work with staff to choose a tee time when you're less likely to be around older golfers.

your playing partner's new driver for a spin on the first hole.

¥ Refuse valet service. Many courses have temporarily stopped offering valet services to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Golfers who visit a club that is not taking such precautions can opt to refuse the service. Doing so decreases the risk of getting or spreading the virus by limiting the number of people with whom you come into direct contact.

¥ Pack supplies. Contact the course in advance to determine if the dining room is open and if the course is providing hand sanitizer at each tee. At-risk golfers may want to skip dining at the course after their round is over, opting to pack their own lunch or eat when they arrive home after playing. If the course is not offering hand sanitizer at each hole, pack your own as an extra precaution.

Golfing in the era of social distancing may be different, but there's no reason golfers cannot still enjoy a summer on the links.

¥ Disinfect clubs before or after playing. Disinfecting clubs and other equipment before and after playing is a simple measure that can reduce golfers' risk of getting the virus or spreading it if they have it but are asymptomatic. Simply wipe down clubs and other equipment with disinfectant or an alcohol-based cleanser that is at least 60 percent alcohol. If playing with a friend, resist the urge to share clubs, no matter how tempting it may be to take

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