



School is out and maybe you are considering some fun activities to do with the kids this summer involving sunshine, water, and sporting activities. Here are a few common sense tips straight from my years of working with families:

Sunshine!

I'm a big fan and encourage parents to make sure their children get enough sunlight without burning. Here's why:

1. **Allow your child to receive sunlight.** If the skin starts to pink or turn red, time to put on the long sleeves. Make sure they are wearing a visor. Sunlight just doesn't make Vitamin D which is necessary for the immune system. It also creates nitric oxide (beneficial for heart health), cholesterol sulfate (great for the stability of cells), and changes the structure of water in the body to a healthy form (liquid crystalline water).
2. **Sunblock** - You can apply this after your child has received some sunlight. If your child burns easily, my favorite sunblock is zinc oxide. I like Badger SPF Sport and Baby Creams. You can visit my store here: <https://us.fullscript.com/welcome/mperro>.
3. Don't forget to give your child **Vitamin C!** Vitamin C helps prevent sunburn by neutralizing free radicals generated by UV exposure, thereby reducing oxidative damage and inflammation in the skin.

Water Safety Tips!

Protecting Children from Drowning and Water-Related Injuries - My Top 8

Warm weather means more time around pools, lakes, beaches, and sprinklers which are some of the most fun and affordable activities of summertime. Children of all ages love water-time adventures. However, it can also bring increased risk of water-related injuries. Sadly, drowning is the leading cause of accidental death in small children.

Here's how to keep your child safe this summer:

1. **Always supervise** - Never leave children alone near water whether it's a pool, lake, bathtub, or even a bucket! Drowning can happen silently and in seconds.
2. **Designate a "water watcher"** - Assign a responsible adult to actively supervise children in or around water and without phones!
3. **Teach water safety early** - Enroll your child in age-appropriate swim lessons, or teach them to swim yourself. Remember that swimming skills do not replace constant supervision.

4. **Use life jackets (not floaties)** - Choose US Coast Guard-approved life jackets for young children and non-swimmers. Inflatable toys and arm floaties are not reliable safety devices. Wear life jackets while your child is in an inflatable pool ring or inner tube are the safest options.
5. **Secure pools and hot tubs** - Install four-sided fencing with a self-closing, self-latching gates, and consider pool alarms to prevent unsupervised access.
6. **Empty small water sources** - Kiddie pools, buckets, and even coolers should be emptied right after use. Young children can drown in just a few inches of water.
7. **Be cautious around open water** - Lakes, rivers, and oceans have hidden hazards like strong currents and drop-offs. Keep kids within an arm's reach and have them wear life vests.
8. **Learn CPR** - I can't stress enough the value of learning CPR! In a water emergency, knowing CPR could save your child's life. Take a certified class from your local Red Cross which is usually very affordable.

Biking Safety Tips!

Enhancing Your Child's Biking Experience - My Top 9



Seeing children on their bicycles brings such joy for the kids and their parents. And it's an activity everyone in the family can do together. Here are a few of my easy-to-do bike tips to have a great time this summer and prevent injuries.

1. **Always wear a helmet** - Make sure your child wears a properly fitted, certified bike helmet every time they ride without exceptions. Helmets reduce the risk of head injury by up to 85%.
2. **Check the bike size** - A bike that's too big or too small can lead to falls. When seated, your child's feet should touch the ground and hands should easily reach the handlebars.
3. **Inspect before every ride** - Teach your child to check tires, brakes, and the chain before hopping on. Regular tune-ups help prevent mechanical issues that can cause crashes. Every kid should know basic bicycle repair skills and carry a small tool kit with them.
4. **Ride in safe spaces** - Encourage riding in parks, on bike paths, or quiet streets. Young children should avoid riding near traffic until they have strong skills and supervision.
5. **Wear bright colors & reflective gear** - Visibility saves lives. Bright clothing, reflective tape, and bike lights (front and rear) help drivers see your child especially at dawn or dusk.
6. **Follow the rules of the road** - Even young riders should learn basic biking rules such as ride in the same direction as traffic, use hand signals, and stop at all signs and intersections.
7. **Avoid distractions** - This is one of my favorite pet peeves: No headphones, phones, or texting while riding. Safe biking means staying alert and aware of the surroundings at all times.
8. **Supervise young riders** - Children under 10 should be closely supervised when biking near cars or intersections. Ride with your children to model safe behavior.
9. **Avoid motorized bicycles** - One of my biggest complaints that I see as I ride my own bike around town are kids zooming past me on battery-assist bikes! Parents, stick to regular bicycles for kids because they promote physical activity, skill development, and safety unlike motorized bikes, which can also increase the risk of serious injury.

As a pediatrician, these are some of my favorite tried-and-true tips gathered over decades of practice. By applying these preventative strategies, you can help protect your child from injury while fostering healthy habits that last a lifetime. Have a great summer!