During the spring and summer we encourage children to put down the tablets and phones, turn off the TV, and get outside to play and explore. Unfortunately, sometimes they will come home with an unwanted friend, a tick.

Ticks are often thought to only be found in heavily wooded areas, however, due to deer and other wildlife, they can be in your very own yard. As some ticks can spread harmful germs, it is important to check your kids skin and head nightly for unwanted critters and to remove a tick as soon as possible.

There are different types of ticks. The most common types are:

* Wood ticks (dog ticks) that are about the size of a watermelon seed
* Deer ticks are smaller and are the size of a poppy seed

To remove a wood tick, use tweezers and grasp near the skin, pull straight up with a gentle steady pressure until the skin tents, then pull with more pressure. The tick and a small piece of skin will separate. If there is no skin, the head of the tick might still be in the skin. Deer ticks can be scraped off with a fingernail or the edge of a credit card.

If the tick is moving when removed, the entire tick was removed. If the head is left in the skin, cleanse the area with rubbing alcohol and attempt to lift or scrape the head out. If a small piece of head remains, the skin will eventually shed. Once the tick is removed, wash your hands and bite area with soap and water and apply antibiotic ointment to the bite. Monitor for rash, fever, severe headache, or swelling, drainage, or pain at the bite.

If you are unable to remove the tick, your child has a widespread rash, a bull’s eye rash around the tick bite, a fever, severe headache, or if the bite looks infected, we will need to see your child in the office.

**First Aid Advice: Tick Bites**

**Water Safety**

**Supervision is rule #1.** Kids must be watched whenever they’re around water. This is true whether the water is in a bathtub, a wading pool, an ornamental fish pond, a swimming pool, a spa, an ocean, or a lake. Young children are especially at risk. They can drown in less than 2 inches (6 centimeters) of water. That means drowning can happen in a sink, toilet bowl, fountains, buckets, inflatable pools, or small bodies of standing water around your home, such as ditches filled with rain water.

Always watch children closely when they’re in or near any water, no matter what their swimming skills. Even kids who know how to swim can be at risk for drowning. For instance, a child could slip and fall on the pool deck, lose consciousness, and fall into the pool and possibly drown.

Young kids and weak swimmers should have an adult swimmer within arm’s reach to provide “touch supervision.”

**Swimming lessons.** Kids over 4 years old should learn how to swim. Check local recreation centers for classes taught by a qualified instructor. Younger kids also can benefit from lessons. They won’t yet learn to swim, but these can help them start to learn about water safety. And if you don’t know how to swim, consider taking lessons.

**What to do in an Emergency**

If a child is missing, always check the pool or other body of water first. Survival depends on a quick rescue and restarting breathing as soon as possible:

* If you find a child in the water, get the child out while calling loudly for help. If someone else is nearby, have them call 911.
* Check to make sure the child’s air passages are clear. If the child is not breathing, start CPR if you are trained to do so. Follow the instructions the 911 emergency operator gives.
* If you think the child has a neck injury, such as from diving:
  * Keep the child on his or her back
  * Brace the neck and shoulders with your hands and forearms to help keep the neck from moving until emergency help arrives. This can prevent further injury to the spine.
  * Keep the child still and speak in calm tones to keep the child comforted.

**Supervision is rule #1.** Kids must be watched whenever they’re around water. This is true whether the water is in a bathtub, a wading pool, an ornamental fish pond, a swimming pool, a spa, an ocean, or a lake.

**Summer 2019**

**Have you scheduled your child’s annual well visit or next well baby visit?**

Summer time is our busiest time of the year due to the amount of back to school and sports physicals that are needed. Please book early to ensure that you get a better selection of dates and times. By July and August, we are often full so please do not wait!

**First Aid Advice: Tick Bites**

**Summer 2019**
Protect Their Skin

When kids are outdoors, it is important to protect their skin to prevent skin damage caused from too much sun exposure.

The sun radiates light to the Earth consisting of invisible UV rays. When these rays reach the skin they cause tanning, burning or other skin damage. A tan is a sign of skin damage and does not protect the skin from exposure to the sun.

The American Academy of Dermatology recommends that all kids, regardless of their skin tone, wear sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. Whatever sunscreen you choose, make sure it is broad-spectrum (protects against both UVA and UVB rays) and if your kids are in or near water, is labeled water resistant. Apply a generous amount 30 minutes before sun exposure and re-apply every 1-2 hours.

Try to stay in the shade when the sun is at its strongest (usually from 10AM to 4PM). If they are in the sun at all during this time, even if just in the backyards playing, make sure you apply and reapply often. Remember that even on a cloudy, cool, or overcast day, children can still get sunburned which can cause skin damage.

Another way to protect the skin is to cover up. To make sure that clothes offer enough protection, put your hand inside the garment to make sure you cannot see it through them. Hats with wide brims are ideal especially for those babies under 6 months of age. Don’t forget to protect those eyes as well with a pair of sunglasses that state they are 100% UV protected.

Some medications make skin more sensitive to UV rays. If your child is on any medication, please check with your pharmacist to see if the medication is one of those meds and if so, take extra skin precautions.

If your child does develop a Sunburn, have your child take a cool (not cold) bath or gently apply cool, wet compresses to the burns to help ease pain and heat. Apply pure aloe vera gel to the sun burned areas. Apply a moisturizing cream to rehydrate the skin and treat itching.

If the sunburn is severe and blisters develop, contact our office.

Playground Safety

Many avoidable injuries and accidents often happen once the weather is nice and kids are outdoors playing.

Playgrounds and outdoor play equipment offer kids fresh air, friends. And exercise.

It’s important for parents to make sure that faulty equipment, improper surfaces, and careless behavior don’t ruin the fun.

Each year more than 200,000 kids are treated in hospital ERs for playground related injuries. Many of these accidents can be prevented with the proper supervision. Young kids cannot always gauge distances properly and are not capable of foreseeing dangerous situations. Older kids like to test their limits. This is why an adult should be there, have full attention and should avoid distractions like telephone calls, texting, and social media, to keep a proper eye on their kids.

When evaluating if the playground equipment is safe, and to help prevent injuries, here are some things to consider:

* Concrete, asphalt, and blacktop are unsafe and unacceptable. Grass, soil, and packed-earth surfaces are also unsafe because weather and wear can reduce their capacities to cushion a child’s fall.

* Safe surfaces include rubber mats or areas loosely filled, at least 12 inches deep, with materials like wood chips (non CCA treated), mulch, sand, or shredded rubber.

* Make sure that there are no spaces that could trap a child’s head, arm, or any other body part.

* Do not allow your child to play on broken playground equipment, wooden equipment that is cracking or splintering, and metal equipment that is rusting.

* If the playground has a sandbox, check for hazardous debris such as sharp sticks or broken glass and that sand is free of bugs.

* Teach your child to never push or roughhouse on jungle gyms, seesaws, or swings. Also, they need to know how to properly use the equipment (feet first going down the slide, don’t climb over guardrails, no standing on swings, only one child per swing).

* Never use playground equipment when it is wet because the moisture makes it slippery.

* Slides can get very hot and cause burns. Be certain to check the surface temperature prior to use.

DID YOU KNOW:

Regular use of sunscreen reduces the risk of skin cancer by over 40%
When your child is sick or injured, it is natural to panic and drive straight to the emergency room (ER) because you know that you can get care, regardless of the time, day, or the severity of your child’s injury. In some cases, it is a true medical emergency and the ER is the most appropriate place to get care. In other cases, the illness or injury can be handled at an urgent care clinic or treatment can be determined at our office during an appointment.

In certain situations, you should dial 911 to get an ambulance instead of taking your child yourself to the ER.

Examples of when to call 911:
- Your child is having trouble breathing and is turning blue
- There has been a car accident and your child is unconscious or seriously injured
- Your child is having a seizure that lasts 3-5 minutes or is having difficulty breathing, or is turning blue during the seizure
- Your child loses consciousness or is not responsive
- Your child might have a neck or spine injury
- Your child has a head injury with loss of consciousness, persistent vomiting, or is not responding normally
- Your child has significantly bleeding
- Your child is having an allergic reaction and is having difficulty breathing or swallowing
- Your child has a possible poisoning and is not responding normally or is having difficulty breathing. In any possible poisoning, call the Poison Control Center (800/222-1222) for expert advice and they may direct you to the ER.

Call our office or exchange immediately if your child is experiencing any of the following symptoms:
- Infants 3 months and younger with a thermometer reading of 99.5 or higher (do not add or subtract a degree)
- Fever is greater than 104
- Fever and pain in the back or stiff neck
- Fever of 100.4 with a rash
- Signs of dehydration: dry mouth, no urine for 8-12 hours, no tears when crying, sunken eyes, severe decreased energy
- Persistent rapid breathing, or wheezing

In a true crisis emergency, it is always best to go to closest ER, however, when you are able, we prefer for patients under 18 years of age to be seen in a pediatric ER. Our ER choice is St. Louis Children’s Hospital on Kingshighway or Missouri Baptist Medical Center on Balas, as they have a dedicated pediatric ER and the physicians there are able to access your child’s medical records.

Pediatric Emergencies

Important Numbers to Have:
- Premier Pediatrics: 314-859-4000
- After Hour Exchange: 314-273-4211
- Poison Control: 800-222-1222

Upcoming Classes:
- Breastfeeding Class:
  - Thurs 7/18
  - 5:45pm
- Newborn 101:
  - Thurs 8/27
  - 5:30pm

Call to register

For the most current information and happenings of the office

Or online at premierpediatrics.wustl.edu/