



Beat the heat this summer

Playing sports in the warm weather is one of the joys of summer. Yet children who play sports or are physically active in hot weather can be at risk for heat illnesses. Children absorb more heat from their environment and sweat less than adults, which makes it harder for them to cool off. Additionally, a child can lose up to a quart of sweat during a two-hour sports game. Parents and coaches need to monitor their child athletes for dehydration and other heat illnesses. Fortunately, heat illnesses can be prevented and successfully treated.

Some tips for parents include: have your child get a physical before playing sports which includes questions about any history of heat illness; tell your child's coach about any history of heat illness; make sure your child is properly hydrated before they go to practice (including giving the child their own water bottle); make sure the coach has your emergency contact numbers; and check if your child's league/team has an emergency action plan.

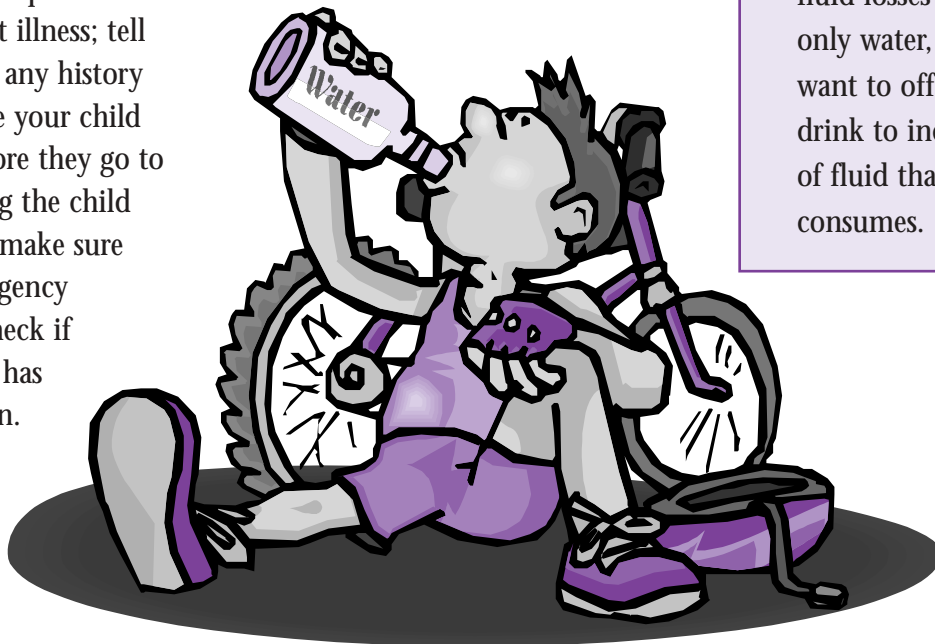
Finally, this summer, children (and parents) should remember their ABC's:

A Always drink before, during and after activity to replace what you've lost through sweat.

B Bring the right fluids. Research shows that sports drinks, rather than water only, hydrate best.

C Consider fluids as part of the essential safety equipment for sports.

Additional information can be found at the National Athletic Trainers' Association web site: www.nata.org/industryresources/heatillnessconsensusstatement.pdf.



How much should your active child drink?

- Record your child's weight before any activity in the heat.
- Weigh your child again when the activity is over.
- Compare your child's pre-activity and post-activity weight. If the child's post-activity weight is less than their pre-activity weight, then the child is not drinking enough.

A loss of as little as 1% body weight can cause a decrease in the child's performance. Scientists have proven that children replace less of their fluid losses when drinking only water, so parents may want to offer a flavored sports drink to increase the amount of fluid that a child actually consumes.

Drowning is the major cause of childhood death

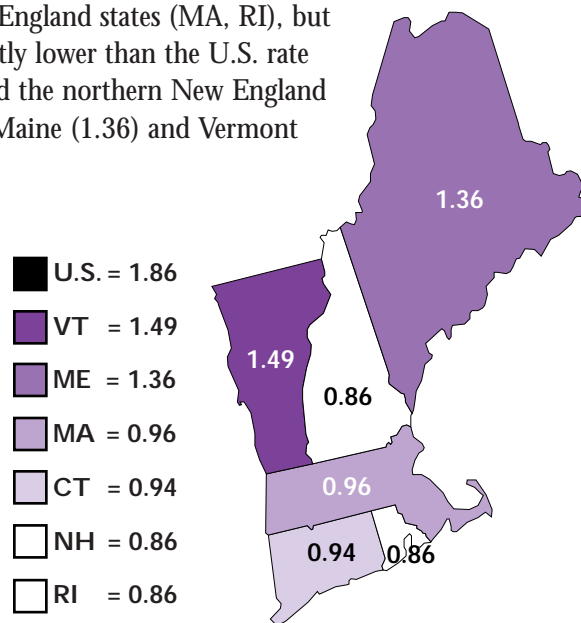
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Drowning is a major cause of death for children less than 15 years of age. Bathtub drowning is especially likely to involve children with seizure disorders or young children who have been left unattended. Spas, hot tubs, whirlpool baths, and backyard swimming pools are extremely hazardous for toddlers. For these younger children, childproof fencing that completely surrounds the pool is very effective in preventing drowning. For older (school age) children, drowning in fresh water (e.g., ponds, lakes) and salt water often involve recreational boating. All persons in a boat, children included, should wear a life jacket or personal flotation device.

The drowning death rate among Connecticut children (0.94 per 100,000 persons) is similar to other southern

tier New England states (MA, RI), but significantly lower than the U.S. rate (1.86) and the northern New England states of Maine (1.36) and Vermont (1.49). •



Drowning Death Rates for children under 15 years old, 1988-2000
Rates are per 100,000

Source: Injury Prevention Center, Connecticut Children's Medical Center



LEARNING FROM THE PROS – Connecticut SAFE KIDS celebrated a successful SAFE KIDS Week with an Injury Prevention Fair at CCMC, where these fourth graders from Burns Elementary School learned about safety.

Keep informed of Connecticut SAFE KIDS happenings! Sign up for our listserv at groups.yahoo.com/group/ctsafekids.

Keep Kids Safe License Plate Update

The Keep Kids Safe License Plate grant applications will be available in August. Due to decreased funding, there will only be one round of applications, which will be due in October. The grant structure will be the same as last time, with larger and smaller grants available for application. •



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