Your friends and neighbors at St. Vincent’s want you to get outdoors and have some fun. Just be aware of some of the seasonal hazards that may be lurking in your own back yard.

**St. Vincent’s Urgent Care Centers**
Walk-in or make your appointment online at planMYcare.com

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Address</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAIRFIELD</td>
<td>1055 Post Road</td>
<td>(203) 259-3440</td>
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<tr>
<td>MONROE</td>
<td>401 Monroe Turnpike</td>
<td>(203) 268-2501</td>
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<td>MILFORD</td>
<td>199 Cherry Street</td>
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<td>SHELTON</td>
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<td>STRATFORD</td>
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<td>(203) 380-3920</td>
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Sunburn

The Lecture

Sunburn is more than a painful nuisance – it’s a serious health risk, especially for the young. The risk of melanoma increases with every significant burn. While wearing sunscreen year round is important, it’s really not enough. Sunglasses, hats and visors are great summer survival tools for all ages.

It Happens to the Best of Us

Let’s face it; most people who suffer sunburn did not set out to do so. It’s easy to lose track of how long you’ve been out there. Falling asleep in the sun, and drinking, are two major culprits for serious burns, while simply forgetting to take along or apply sunscreen is another.

Now What?

If you do suffer sunburn, there are some steps you can take to reduce the discomfort:

- Drink lots of water or juice to replace fluids you lost.
- Soak the burned area with cool, wet cloths.
- Take pain reliever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
- Use a moisturizer that contains vitamin E or aloe to help soothe sunburned skin.

The average sunburn can be treated at home. But if a blistering burn covers 20% or more of the body (a child’s whole back), seek medical attention.

DID YOU KNOW?

Drinking something red makes sense. Juices like tomato, pomegranate and cranberry can actually block damaging UV rays. The natural pigments in dark fruit juices are absorbed by our skin cells. Drinking 4 to 8 ounces a day can reduce UV damage by more than 26%. While you’re at it - have some carrots. They’ve got the highest levels of vitamin A which is another natural skin protector.
Heatstroke & Dehydration

Heatstroke is the most severe form of dehydration, and occurs when your internal temperature rises to dangerously high levels. Your skin gets hot, but you stop sweating. Someone with heatstroke may pass out, have hallucinations, or suffer seizures.

- Skin flushed, dry and hot to the touch
- Altered mental state
- Nausea or vomiting
- Rapid breathing
- Racing heart rate
- Headache
- Seizures

If you see someone with heatstroke symptoms, have someone call for immediate medical assistance while you:

- Get the person indoors or to a shady area.
- Cool the person rapidly, using whatever means you can.
- Apply wet sheets or towels and fan the person vigorously.
- Do not give someone suffering from heatstroke any fluids to drink.

DID YOU KNOW?

Bananas are the way to go. They’re easy to pack and eat on the run - and the potassium in there helps to replenish the electrolytes we lose through sweating. Munching on raisins, blueberries or an apple can also help you stay energized in the heat.
Picnic Poisoning

BACKYARD SURVIVAL TOOLS:
MULTIPLE CUTTING BOARDS AND KNIVES,
MEAT THERMOMETER, COOLER

According to the Center for Foodborne Illness Research & Prevention, one out of every six of us will get some sort of food poisoning this year – and summer is peak season. We can’t necessarily blame our last meal, because it can take anywhere from hours to days for symptoms to erupt.

What Did I Eat that Made Me Sick?

The menu is a long one. Likely culprits are basically all meat and fish, deli products, produce, eggs, multi-ingredient foods, baked goods and beverages. But the 10 riskiest of that bunch are as follows, in order:

- Leafy greens
- Tuna
- Potatoes
- Ice cream
- Sprouts
- Eggs
- Oysters
- Cheese
- Tomatoes
- Berries

To prevent food poisoning, follow the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s advice to:

- Clean - Wash your hands as well as the surfaces where you'll be preparing foods.
- Separate - Wrap raw meat securely and keep it stored away from other food items.
- Cook – Steaks should be cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 145 degrees, ground beef and pork to 160 degrees, and poultry to 165 degrees.
- Chill -- Keep everything refrigerated as long as possible. Store perishable picnic items in an insulated cooler packed with ice, and follow the "last in, first out" rule - whatever you’re going to eat first should go at the top of the cooler

Mild cases of food poisoning can be cared for at home. If symptoms such as vomiting, diarrhea, or cramps persist for more than a couple days, or more than 24 hours for young children, see a doctor.

DID YOU KNOW?

Marinades and condiments count as food too. Be sure to keep them refrigerated until you’re ready to use them. Don’t let them sit out on the counter or in the sun.
"Poison" Plants

BACKYARD SURVIVAL TOOLS:
CALAMINE, OATMEAL, COLD COMPRESS

Tis the season - for poison ivy, oak and sumac. You can get the rash, even if the plants don’t look alive yet. As far as the rashes are concerned, there’s really no difference between the three. Poison ivy, oak and sumac outbreaks are usually indistinguishable from each other. All three plants contain the same resin, called an urushiol, which is to blame for the reaction most of us get. The plants themselves do look a little different. Here are the leaves to avoid:

- Poison ivy has three leaflets with a smoother edge.
- Poison oak also has three leaflets, with a more feathered edge.
- Poison sumac has 5, 7 or more leaflets to each stem, with a smooth edge.

If you think you’ve been exposed, immediately rinse your skin with warm, soapy water to remove the resin. You’ll also want to wash any clothing and tools that may have come in contact with the plant. Remember, that resin can stick to shoes, garden tools, toys and pet leashes and fur.

Poison plant rashes tend to erupt and get worse the following day. Good old Calamine lotion is still a good remedy. Taking baths in an oatmeal or baking soda preparation can also provide relief, as can cool compresses.

Most people can safely treat the rash at home. However, if you experience any of the following symptoms, go to the emergency room right away.

- Trouble breathing or swallowing.
- The rash covers most of your body.
- You experience swelling, especially of the eyes or mouth.
- The rash develops anywhere on your face or genitals.

DID YOU KNOW?

There’s another summer rash to watch out for - from limes! Some of our favorite Mexican Southwestern delicacies call for limes and are often enjoyed in the sun, and that can be a problem for the person cutting the limes. For some people, the oil from the lime peel can cause a phototoxic reaction when exposed to the sun. Those who are sensitive may wind up with a nasty rash or even blisters on the skin from the phenomenon. If you’ll be handling limes this season, be on the safe side and thoroughly wash your hands before you head outside. Many people who suffer from lime disease don’t realize it. The rash often doesn’t appear for 48 hours after exposure and can last for 28 days.

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Bee Stings

BACKYARD SURVIVAL TOOLS:
ICE, ANTIHISTAMINE, PAIN RELIEVER, CREDIT CARD

For most people, a sting from a bee, wasp or hornet is just painful, but for some, it can be life-threatening. According to the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology, three in 100 adults in the United States have life-threatening allergies to insect stings.

How Do I Know if I’m Allergic?
If you’ve never been stung by a bee, you may not be aware of a potentially harmful allergy. If you experience any of these symptoms after a sting, see a doctor or go to the ER immediately:

- Hives, itchiness, and swelling over large areas of your body
- Tightness in the chest or trouble breathing
- Swelling of the tongue or face
- Dizziness or feeling you will pass out

For those not allergic to bees, here is the general protocol to follow if you’ve been stung:

- Remove the stinger by scraping the back of a credit card or other straight-edged object across the stinger. Do not use tweezers - these may squeeze the venom sac and increase the amount of venom released.
- Wash the site thoroughly with soap and water.
- Apply ice, wrapped in a cloth, to the sting for 10 minutes on, and 10 minutes off. Repeat this process.
- If necessary, take an antihistamine, or apply creams that reduce itching.

DID YOU KNOW?
If you look or smell like a flower, you are more likely to attract the attention of a bee. They love the smell of some sunscreens, shampoos, perfumes and after shaves. They also love flowery prints and shiny jewelry and buckles. That’s why beekeepers wear white, without accessories.

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Rabies

BACKYARD SURVIVAL TOOLS:
LOCAL ANIMAL CONTROL INFORMATION,
AWARENESS OF WILDLIFE ON YOUR PROPERTY, PROMPT ACTION

What is Rabies?

Rabies is a viral disease most often transmitted through the saliva of infected mammals. People usually become infected after a bite, however, any contact with the saliva of an infected animal (alive or dead) can potentially lead to infection.

The rabies virus attacks the nervous system (brain and spinal cord). The first symptoms are similar to a flu-like illness—fever, headache, and general discomfort. Within days, the disease can progress to symptoms such as anxiety, confusion, agitation, abnormal behavior, delirium, and hallucinations. Once symptoms appear, the disease is almost always fatal. Therefore, any person who has been bitten, scratched, or somehow exposed to the saliva of a potentially rabid animal should see a physician as soon as possible for post-exposure treatment.

What Does the Post-exposure Vaccination Include?

In the United States, an exposed person who has never received any rabies vaccine will first receive a dose of rabies immune globulin (a blood product that contains antibodies against rabies), which gives immediate, short-term protection. This shot should be given in or near the wound area.

An exposed person should also be given a series of rabies vaccinations. The first dose should be given as soon as possible after the exposure. Additional doses should be given on days 3, 7, and 14 after the first shot. These shots are given in the deltoid muscle of the arm. Children can instead receive the shots in the muscle of the thigh. This set of vaccinations is highly effective at preventing rabies if given as soon as possible following an exposure.

What are the Risks from Rabies Vaccine and Immune Globulin?

Adverse reactions to rabies vaccine and immune globulin are not common. Newer vaccines in use today cause fewer adverse reactions than previously available vaccines. Mild, local reactions such as pain, redness, swelling, or itching at the injection site have been reported.

DID YOU KNOW?

Raccoons are the most common animal to be infected with Rabies in the United States. Bats get the bad rap with rabies - but with good reason. They are the animal most often responsible for transmission to humans in the United States. Cats are the most common domestic animal infected with rabies in the United States but dogs are the most common worldwide.

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Mowing the Lawn

BACKYARD SURVIVAL TOOLS:
HEAVY SHOES, GLASSES, EAR PLUGS, BABYSITTER

Statistics from the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission: Each year 800 children are run over by riding mowers or small tractors; 75 people are killed, and 20,000 injured; one in five deaths involves a child.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children should be at least:
- 12 years of age to operate a walk-behind power mower or hand mower safely
- 16 years of age to operate a riding lawn mower safely

Adults need to take precautions too:
- Wear close-toed, substantial shoes. Do not go barefoot or wear flip-flops or sneakers while mowing.
- Clear your yard of potential flying objects such as sticks, stones and toys.
- Wear ear and eye protection.
- Never allow children to ride as passengers on ride-on mowers.

DID YOU KNOW?
It’s not always safe to drink from your garden hose. It's a hot summer day and you or your kids might be tempted to take a refreshing slurp from that garden hose. Not so fast! You could be getting a mouthful of lead! The PVC that most hoses are made from could contain a dangerous amount of lead. That goes for the brass fitting on the end, too.

Some hoses have warning labels on them that they are not to be used for drinking. Others may be labeled “drinking water safe.” Even those should be flushed out first. A lot of hoses aren’t labeled at all, so you’re better off skipping the sipping. It's also a good idea to wash your hands after handling the hose since the lead can be transferred from there to your mouth.

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BACKYARD SURVIVAL TOOLS: HOSE, FIRE EXTINGUISHER, BUCKET OF WATER

It’s best to leave the fireworks displays to the pros. Sadly, the number of fireworks-related deaths and injuries each year is on the rise, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).

In 2013, there were eight deaths and an estimated 11,400 consumers who sustained injuries related to fireworks. Illegal and homemade fireworks were involved in all eight deaths. It’s important to know that some of our seasonal favorites can really put you and your family at risk. Here are the injury statistics from smaller fireworks we need to take more seriously:

- Sparklers: 31%
- Firecrackers: 11%
- Roman Candles: 6%
- Bottle Rockets: 4%

Because fireworks are now legal in Connecticut and are easy to buy, it’s important to review the safety steps each time you use them. Remember, you’re setting an example for young eyes and ears.

- Never try to make your own fireworks.
- Always have a bucket of water and a hose nearby in case of accidents.
- Steer clear of others — fireworks have been known to backfire or shoot off in the wrong direction. Never throw or point fireworks at someone, even in jest.
- Light one firework at a time (not in glass or metal containers), and never relight a dud.
- Soak all fireworks in a bucket of water before throwing them in the trash can.
- Think about your pet. Animals have sensitive ears and can be extremely frightened or stressed by fireworks.

DID YOU KNOW?

Sparklers burn as hot as 2,000 degrees. People often hand sparklers out to children and that’s a bad idea. They can cause significant eye injuries, burns or even explode in your hand.
Ladders & Swing Sets & Weeds – Oh My!

BACKYARD SURVIVAL TOOLS: INSIGHT, COMMON SENSE

Among the leading causes for Emergency Room and Urgent Care visits in the summertime are broken bones, bruises, cuts, burns and back pain. While we are anxious to get outside for exercise, home improvement and play, we need to consider the potential pitfalls in and around our homes:

Ladders: According to OSHA, falls from portable ladders (step, straight, combination and extension) are one of the leading causes of occupational fatalities and injuries, and homeowners eager to get the job done are especially at risk. Always look for overhead power lines before handling a ladder, and always maintain a 3-point contact on the ladder (two hands and a foot, or two feet and a hand). The best practice when it comes to using a ladder is to be sure someone else is nearby in the event of a fall.

Weeds: Yes, weeds. Pulling weeds and performing other yard work that requires, pushing, pulling, lifting or twisting are common causes of back pain or a serious strain that can keep you off your feet or interfere with summer fun. It’s important to limber up before tackling that yard work or rigorous outdoor activity, with some gentle stretching and trunk rotations. Remember to always bend from the knees, take frequent breaks, and avoid repetition of the same movement by switching tasks.

Swing Sets and Trampolines: Swing Sets are great fun and help keep young children active and happy. Just be sure you’re swing set is up to snuff. It should be checked often for any broken or exposed screws and bolts and should have an energy absorbent material such as sand, rubber or wood chips underneath. If you want a pediatrician’s advice about trampolines – don’t get one. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that parents never allow their children on trampolines. If you need more convincing, bear in mind that owning a trampoline could impact your homeowner’s insurance rates and coverage. If you must have one, be sure you are in compliance with your homeowner’s trampoline policies.

DID YOU KNOW? Spray sunscreen and bug sprays are really popular – and flammable! There have been some recent cases involving serious burns while applying spray sunscreen near an open flame. Spraying aerosol sunscreen or bug repellent near open charcoal, fire pits, torches or gas grills poses an obvious hazard.

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