

April 2007

RM News & Notes



Safety Tip of the Day

SUN POISONING

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Red skin rash, sometimes with small blisters, in areas exposed to sunlight
- Fever
- Fatigue or dizziness

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

- Limit your time in the sun
- Avoid the sun, during 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. This is when the sun's rays are the strongest
- Wear protective clothing such as a hat and sunglasses
- Check your skin every month for signs of skin damage
- Use sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher

If you do have a . . . Poison emergency?



Visit us on the web:

<http://gpc.dhr.georgia.gov/portal/site/DHR-GPC/>

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Message from the Risk Manager

Hopefully, you are enjoying the warmer weather we've been having recently. People are bringing out their shorts and tank tops and I've even seen a couple of swim suit tops being worn out. While it might still be a little early for most to start "laying out in the sun", I have heard several people talk about their trips to the tanning salon to get a head start on their golden tan. While you may initially look better and feel better with a tan, you really are not better as the tan is the body's way of trying to protect you from sun damage. If you are paying for the tanning salon, why not try some of the professional airbrushing or spray on tans. The self-tanning products are getting better every year and you can get the same healthy glow without the skin damage. Remember, regardless of the status of your tan, we should all check regularly for any skin changes that could signal a more serious condition. Don't forget to check the areas that you don't normally see, and which probably don't get sunscreen when you do use it: like the tips of your ears, back of the neck and the part along your hair (or slightly balding spot). Any suspicious area should be promptly checked by a physician. While the incidence of skin cancer is rising, early detection is the key to a good recovery. Enjoy the brilliant sunshine and beautiful weather, but don't forget to protect yourself.

Darlene

Safety Officer News and Notes

Summer Safety Danger of Sun Poisoning

Now that summer is here, the poison center reminds you to be on the lookout for seasonal poisonings. It is easy to underestimate how powerful the sun's rays are and the dangers that exist from overexposure. If you are a sun worshiper you probably think that having a tan makes you look healthier. But be aware of the long-term damages like premature aging and cancer. Additionally, some people are more sensitive to sunlight than others and develop an allergic reaction to exposure to the sun. This reaction is commonly referred to as "Sun Poisoning".

What causes it?

The sun's rays that damage your skin, are ultraviolet A and ultraviolet B rays (UVA and UVB rays). Exposure to these rays over time can cause irreversible damage to your skin. The "tanning effect" is the body's way of trying to protect itself from the harmful rays. When overexposure occurs the result is a burn. When an allergic reaction occurs the result is blotchy red patches, they are also referred to as "hives". Hives are a sign of high histamine levels.

The medications you are taking may increase your chances of sunburn. Many medications can increase your skin's sensitivity to sunlight; the more sensitive you are, the greater your chance of getting sunburned. Some common medications that can increase sensitivity include thiazide and some other diuretics, tetracycline and sulfa antibiotics, and non steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, such as ibuprofen. Antihistamine or hydrocortisone have proven to be effective in reducing the swelling and itching. However be aware that hydrocortisone is a steroid and large or extended doses can cause unwanted side effects. You should always consult with your doctor before taking any medications.

Treatment options

Medications are available over-the-counter and with a prescription.

SUN POISONING

pho-to-der-ma-ti-tis /pho-to-der-ma-ti-tis/ (-der?mah-ti'tis)
n. Dermatitis caused by exposure to ultraviolet light.

General Information

Sun poisoning is a reaction to overexposure to the sun. The skin in areas most exposed to sunlight is involved. You may experience sun poisoning with or without a **deep** sunburn.

Skin Reactions and Rash

A surface skin reaction to sun which can include a red, bumpy, hive-like rash caused either by "polymorphous light eruptions" or by a sun allergy. Many people become **extra sensitive** due to cosmetics, perfumes, hormonal or other skin changes.

Sun poisoning symptoms develop on the skin within a few hours to a few days after sun exposure, lasts up to two weeks, and could include: a rash, red and warm that can become scaly small reddish pimples, "hives" or blisters.

Skin reactions are more likely if you have a pre-existing condition or take certain medicines that increase photosensitivity (reaction to ultraviolet light). These include some antibiotics, diuretics and oral contraceptives. Many topical drugs, chemicals and cosmetics including lipstick, perfume and soaps, can also cause a photosensitive reaction. You can reduce the likelihood of these skin reactions by checking the medications and cosmetics that you use, and by protecting your skin from UV damage

Risk Factors

- Underlying infection
- Previous episodes of sun poisoning
- Metabolic disorders, such as diabetes mellitus or thyroid disease
- Recurrence of the rash and other symptoms when exposed to the sun--**even for short periods** -- especially in spring and summer.

Safety Stories

Here Comes the Sun

We were "roughing it" at a NASCAR race in Bristol, Tennessee. The day turned out to be unusually hot and with this being a night race, I spent a good portion of the afternoon reading in the shade of the tarps that we had put up in front of the tent. I've been badly sunburned a couple of times so I'm very cautious about sun exposure. I intentionally moved with the shade so that I didn't need to use sunscreen. That evening at the race, I began to feel a bit odd. I finally gave up trying to get comfortable in my seat and went downstairs to the open concession area. I pulled down my socks and was horrified to find my ankles badly swollen and a deep red color going up my legs. Thankfully, the race was ending so I waited for my husband and instead of our usual souvenir shopping; we had to spend the next couple of hours at the raceway medical center where I was treated for sun poisoning. Turns out the tarps which we used to provide cooling shade and protection from any rain did not block the sun's UV rays. I learned the hard way that shade is not always enough protection. A little bit of sunscreen could have saved me a lot of misery.

Up Coming Events

Each program is advertised by Risk Management and is available to each employee of Columbia County and the city employees of Grovetown and Harlem. Additionally, the Defensive Driving Courses may be attended by immediate family members of employees, on a space available basis, for a nominal fee.

Pre-registration is required.

For additional information or to register contact Risk Management. 706-312-7475

Safety Review Board **April 12, 2007**

Defensive Driving

Course – 8 hour **April 17, 2007**
 May 10, 2007
 June 5, 2007

Defensive Driving

Course – 4 hour **April 26, 2007**
 June 14, 2007

CPR/AED/First Aid **May 15, 2007**

County Office Closed **May 28, 2007**

APRIL 2007

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Handy Hints

Easy Deviled Eggs

Put cooked egg yolks in a zip lock bag. Seal, mash till they are all broken up. Add remainder of ingredients, reseal, keep mashing it up mixing thoroughly, and cut the tip of the baggy, squeeze mixture into egg. Just throw bag away when done easy clean up.

WISHING YOU A
 Happy Easter



April 8th