

# Doctor's Advice: Beware of Summer Pitfalls

By JAMES MCGUINNESS, M.D.

June is noted for many significant topics including: Men's Health Month, National PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) Awareness Month, National Safety Month, National Cancer Survivor's Day (first Sunday in June), and of course, Father's Day. Don't forget Dad on his special day.

June is the first real month of summer. As a child, I remember playing outside with my neighborhood friends until long after the sun went down. The world is a different place today and young kids hanging out at night is not the safest idea.

Summertime is a time of fun and relaxation for most people. However, the heat and sun can be dangerous for many, unless proper precautions are taken. Every year people come to health centers, hospitals and doctors' offices suffering from the ill effects of the heat.

Here are some suggestions to ensure a fun, safe summer at any age. As we get

older, we are more susceptible to dehydration because we lose some of our ability to conserve water. We may have difficulty adjusting to temperature changes. Be sure to drink plenty of water on hot days and bring a supply of water when driving or going for a ride. Even small increases in temperature can be harmful to older adults who are coping with chronic medical conditions.

Keep cool by visiting malls, movie theaters and libraries. One of the better places to cool off would be in an air-conditioned home. Keep in mind that some chronic medical conditions and/or medications can impair the body's ability to react efficiently to rising temperature.

High temperatures can be life-threatening and keeping in touch with aging adults is very important. Get to know your neighbors and learn a bit about them. Sometimes younger neighbors can come

by and check on their elderly friends to see if everyone is OK. Have a list of emergency phone numbers and contacts that can be displayed in an easily visible area of the home.

During the summer, be particularly cautious about an abnormally high body temperature known as hyperthermia, which in its advanced form is known as heat stroke and can be life-threatening. Make sure to know the warning signs and get medical attention immediately if you or anyone you know is experiencing any of these symptoms: body temperature greater than 104 degrees, confused or agitated behavior, dry flushed skin, nausea and/or vomiting, headache, heavy breathing, rapid pulse, and/or lack of sweating.

Wearing sunglasses can protect your eyes from harmful UV rays and preserve your vision. Everyone, young and old, should wear sunscreen when outdoors. Hats, especially

for those people with light-colored or no hair as well as light-colored/loose-fitting clothing can help you feel cooler.

Do not forget about insect and tick bites. If you live in areas where there are a lot of mosquitoes and ticks, use an appropriate repellent to help reduce the risk of getting bit. If you enjoy outdoor activities, such as walking or gardening, make sure to wear the proper clothing and protective gear.

If you follow these suggestions, there's no reason why everyone can't have an enjoyable and fun-filled summer.

*The natural healing force in each one of us is the greatest force in getting well.*

— Hippocrates

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## RECOGNIZING AND RECOVERING FROM EATING DISORDERS

By Meredith O'Brien

One of the many myths out there about eating disorders is that you can tell by looking at someone if they have one. You cannot tell if someone has an eating disorder by looking at them. A majority of people who have eating disorders may appear to be healthy, yet they are very ill. Unfortunately in our weight-obsessed culture we think someone needs to be emaciated to have an eating disorder. This is not true and this myth is very dangerous.

Eating disorders are life-threatening disorders. Causes of eating disorders reflect a complex combination of biopsychosocial factors including genetics, temperament, biology, lack of coping skills, trauma and sociocultural ideals. The most common precipitating factor is going on a diet. And for those who are genetically predisposed, dieting can be the catalyst to increased obsession with food and weight leading to destructive cycles.

There are different types of eating disorders: anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge-eating disorder, avoidant restrictive food intake disorder (ARFID) and other specified eating or feeding disorder (OSFED). Typically with these disorders people have a strained relationship with food, an inaccurate perception of their bodies and, as it progresses, the eating disorder interferes with many aspects of their lives, including their health, relationships, work and school.

Over 30 million people of all ages and genders suffer from eating disorders in the United States. Every 62 minutes at least one person dies as a result of their eating disorder. Eating disorders have the highest mortality rate of any mental illness. Early detection has been reported to increase the chances of recovery and full recovery is possible.

Here are some of the signs and symptoms to look for in yourself or loved ones:

- Behaviors including restriction, bingeing, purging, over-exercise and laxative use.
- A preoccupation with body, weight and shape.
- Self-evaluation is unduly influenced by body, weight and shape
- Fluctuations of weight, both up and down.
- Fear of gaining weight.
- Develops food rituals (e.g. refusing to eat whole categories of food, excessive chewing, cutting food into small pieces and rearranges food on a plate).
- Complains of lethargy, cold intolerance and abdominal pain.
- Consistently makes excuses to avoid mealtimes or situations involving food.
- Drinks excessive amount of water and caffeine to

suppress appetite.

- Visits the bathroom after meals to purge what they ate.
- Classifies food as "good" or "bad."
- Chronically diets.
- Changes in exercise patterns.
- Rigidity in thoughts around food.
- Mood fluctuations (irritability, depression, anxiety and isolation).
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Dizziness, especially upon standing.

Recovery consists of physical, behavioral and psychological recovery. If you suspect that you or a loved one is struggling with an eating disorder please contact the NEDA helpline at 1-800-931-2237. For crisis situations, text "NEDA" to 741741 to be connected to a trained volunteer.

*Meredith O'Brien is a licensed clinical social worker and a certified intuitive eating counselor. Meredith O'Brien & Affiliates, LLC, located in Red Bank, offers outpatient counseling. She writes about her personal recovery from anorexia in her blog [recoveryfromanorexia.com](http://recoveryfromanorexia.com).*

### HEALTH NOTES

#### BLOOD DRIVE AT LITTLE SILVER JUNE 11

NJ Blood Services, a division of NY Blood Center, will hold a Community Blood Drive from 3 to 7 p.m. June 11 at Point Road Elementary School, 357 Little Silver Point Road, Little Silver.

All donors will get a \$10 Target gift card. Donors must be between 17 and 76 years old. Please eat before you come and bring ID. To make an appointment, visit [tinyurl.com/GiveBloodNJBS](http://tinyurl.com/GiveBloodNJBS) or call 800-933-2566. Walk-ins are welcome.

#### MONMOUTH MEDICAL CENTER RECEIVES HIGHEST SCORE FOR PATIENT SAFETY

Monmouth Medical Center was awarded an "A" Hospital Safety Score rating by the Leapfrog Group, an independent national nonprofit run by employers and other large purchasers of health benefits.

Monmouth Medical Center is the only hospital in the region to receive an "A" Hospital Safety Score by the Leapfrog Group for nine consecutive rating periods.

Updated twice a year, in the spring and in the fall, the Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade is the only hospital rating focused exclusively on hospital safety. Its A, B, C, D or F letter grades are an easy way for consumers to choose the safest hospital

to seek care and have quickly become the gold standard measure of patient safety. Developed under the guidance of a Blue-Ribbon National Expert Panel, the Safety Grade assigns letter grades based on a hospital's performance in preventing medical errors, infections and other harms.

Performance across many areas of hospital care is considered in establishing the qualifications for the award, including infection rates, maternity care and the hospital's capacity to prevent medication errors.

#### RIVERVIEW RECEIVES SUSTAINABILITY AWARD

Hackensack Meridian Health Riverview Medical Center recently received Practice Greenhealth's Emerald award for environmental performance and sustainability.

Practice Greenhealth is a health care membership organization providing sustainability solutions that benefit patients and employees, communities and the environment. The Green-

health Emerald Award recognizes hospitals that have gone above and beyond in their sustainability efforts. This competitive award acknowledges advanced sustainability programs and exemplary scores in a range of categories.

To date, Riverview Medical Center has committed to providing healthier food options, reducing waste and using safer chemicals within the hospital. The facility has also worked to reduce energy consumption through conservation measures that were implemented in partnership with the NJ Clean Energy Program.

Riverview has also incorporated other sustainability initiatives, such as promoting recycling and developing a targeted approach to hospital structure and its impact on the environment.



COURTESY CHOP

#### CHOP DEDICATES A BRIDGE TO THE KORTNEY ROSE FOUNDATION

The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) officially dedicated a patient bridge linking the hospital's South Tower to CHOP's pediatric oncology/bone marrow transplant unit, to honor Kortney Rose Gillette, the namesake of The Kortney Rose Foundation (KRF). The dedication ceremony also recognized the steadfast support of KRF's founders, Richard and Kristen Gillette of Oceanport (pictured above), who, since 2007, have raised over \$2 million to support and accelerate the world-class research taking place at CHOP's brain tumor research program and through the CHOP-led Children's Brain Tumor Tissue Consortium (CBTTC), of whom KRF is a founding research partner. The Kortney Rose Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charity created by Kortney's parents after her death in 2006 from a rare brain tumor to create her legacy of helping other children through the promise of research. Since inception, the foundation has built a playground in Kortney's name, is responsible for over \$2 million donated to pediatric brain tumor research, was a founding funder of the CBTTC, and was one of the primary supporters of the pilot research study to come out of the CBTTC called "Open DIPG." The foundation was also instrumental in passing legislation naming May as Brain Tumor Awareness Month in New Jersey.



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