



MEDIA RELEASE

Contact: Mike Jarrett
Public Information Officer

(304)345-2312 Ext. 123
mikejarrett@kceaa.org

Kanawha County Emergency Ambulance Authority First Aid Tip

“SUNBURN”

Sunburn is from over-exposure to the harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun. While the symptoms are usually temporary (such as red skin that is painful to the touch), the skin damage is often permanent and can have serious long-term health effects, including skin cancer. Sun exposure can also cause first and second degree burns.

Symptoms

The first signs of sunburn may not appear for a few hours. The full effect to your skin may not appear for 24 hours or longer. Possible symptoms include:

- Red, tender skin that is warm to touch.
- Blisters that develop hours to days later.
- Severe reactions (sometimes called "sun poisoning"), including fever, chills, nausea, or rash.
- Skin peeling on sunburned areas several days after the sunburn.

First Aid

- Try taking a cool bath or shower. Or place wet, cold wash cloths on the burn for 10 to 15 minutes, several times a day.
- Apply a soothing lotion to the skin approved by your Doctor.
- Aloe gel is a common household remedy for sunburns. Aloe contains active compounds that help stop pain and inflammation of the skin.
- An over-the-counter pain medication, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen may be helpful. DO NOT give aspirin to children.

Do Not

- DO NOT apply petroleum jelly, benzocaine, lidocaine, or butter to the sunburn. They make the symptoms worse and can prevent healing.
- DO NOT wash burned skin with harsh soap or scrub with anything abrasive.

Call your Physician if you experience mild symptoms of the following...

- If your eyes may be sensitive to light.
- Blisters developing from burned areas.

Call Emergency Medical Services immediately if there are signs of shock, heat exhaustion, dehydration, or other serious reaction.

These signs include:

- Feeling faint or dizzy
- Rapid pulse or rapid breathing
- Extreme thirst, no urine output, or sunken eyes
- Pale, clammy, or cool skin
- Nausea, fever, chills, or rash

Prevention

- Avoid sun exposure during hours of peak sun ray intensity.
- Apply generous amounts of sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30. Pay special attention to your face, nose, ears, and shoulders. The higher the SPF, the greater the protection.
- Apply sunscreen 30 minutes prior to sun exposure to allow penetration. Re-apply after swimming and every 2 hours while you are outdoors.
- Wear sun hats. There is also SPF clothing and swimwear available.
- Wear sunglasses with UV protection.
- Use a lip balm with sunscreen.