

Safe summer fun for seniors

With Memorial Day on the way and summer immediately following, it's time to start planning some safe summer fun.

Believe it or not, activity breeds energy. If you're a senior like me, or a seniors' caregiver, you have to believe an active senior lives a more rewarding, happier life.

Some medications make seniors more susceptible to dehydration

As seniors, we still enjoy the same activities we have enjoyed all our lives, the challenge is doing those activities safely. Outdoor activities leave us susceptible to sunburn, eye damage from UV dangers, dehydration, over exertion, or worst case, heat stroke. Some medications make us more prone to dehydration, so check the labels carefully and drink lots of water.

How to protect yourself or your senior from those dangers

Morning or evening walks in the park are perfect. The same is true for gardening, miniature golf, or fishing. Some of us prefer the warmth of the summer sun and the vitamin D it provides. So, get ready for a picnic in the park by wearing floppy hats, wraparound sunglasses, or prescription glasses that darken in the bright sun. Drink plenty of water, before and during your activities, wear loose fitting clothing, and apply sunscreen to exposed areas. How about a light hike for bird-watching or photography? Be sure to take along a parasol or a light colored umbrella and take plenty of rest stops, perhaps for an ice cream cone. What about a trip to a local berry patch or fruit and vegetable garden? Even if you don't dare to brave a backache from stooping to pick those, they usually have some for sale and you could make your own ice cream with those fresh fruits or berries. And don't forget swimming, water aerobics, or just walking in the pool.

Don't forget to plan for rainy days, as well

Just because you can't get outside, doesn't mean your only choice is the boob-tube. But, if you like baseball, you can leave the TV on while you enjoy some scrapbooking, or while making a collage of scanned pictures printed on plain paper, making a mosaic, playing chess, checkers, or solitaire, if necessary. Take periodic stretch breaks between innings – not just the seventh inning!

Whatever your plans for this summer, plan to do them safely!