



Live Well, Work Well

July 2025

Grilling Safety Tips

Although grilling is a popular way to prepare food, it can also be dangerous. According to the National Fire Protection Association, an average of 9,000 home fires involve grills, hibachis or barbecues each year. May, June, July and August are the most active months for grill fires, with July being the top month.

Some 4 million outdoor grills are used across the United States on any given summer day.

Keep these 10 fire safety tips in mind when grilling:

1. Keep your grill at least 10 feet away from other objects, including your house, decks, outdoor seating and overhanging branches.
2. Set up the grill on a flat surface, and don't bring it into an unventilated or enclosed space (e.g., garage or porch). This is not only a major fire hazard but also a carbon monoxide hazard.
3. Check the connection between the propane tank and the fuel line before using a gas grill to ensure it's not leaking and is working properly.
4. Turn off the gas if you suspect that your gas grill is leaking, and get the unit fixed before lighting it. Never use a match to check for leaks.

5. Turn off the grill and the gas if your propane grill's flame goes out, and wait at least five minutes before relighting the grill.
6. Only use starter fluid with charcoal grills—never with gas grills.
7. Keep children and pets at least 3 feet away from the area until the grill is completely cool.
8. Never leave your grill unattended while in use.
9. Avoid overloading the grill, as too much fat dripping at once can cause flare-ups.
10. Clean the grates and trays regularly to remove grease and fat buildup.

Not only can grills start fires, but they can also cause burns. Exercise caution as you flip food on the grill to ensure your hands and arms do not get burned. Additionally, be sure to use long-handled utensils to help keep your hands at a safe distance from the flames.

Overall, practicing vigilance and taking proper precautions while grilling can help reduce fires and associated burn injuries.

First-aid Kit Essentials

Summer is synonymous with adventure and outdoor fun. Whether exploring a park, swimming, hiking a trail or road-tripping, having a first-aid kit can make all the difference in an emergency.

A well-stocked first-aid kit can help you respond quickly and effectively to common injuries. Keep at least one first-aid kit in your home and your vehicle. Consider stocking these basic first-aid kit supplies:

- Bandages of various sizes
- Elastic bandage wrap
- Flashlight and batteries
- Hydrogen peroxide
- Instant hot and cold packs

- Scissors
- Sterile gauze pads and tape
- Thermometer
- Tweezers

Additionally, you can stock your kit with over-the-counter items, such as aloe vera gel, antihistamines, hydrocortisone cream, pain and fever medications, and sunscreen.

Ongoing, remember to check the expiration dates and make sure you haven't used up items and need replacements.

Understanding the Label on Your Sunscreen

Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the United States. Most cases of melanoma, the deadliest kind of skin cancer, are caused by exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light. The sun's rays can damage your skin in as little as 15 minutes. While there are several steps you can take to limit your exposure to the sun, proper sunscreen selection and application are critical.

The Environmental Working Group (EWG) analyzed more than 2,200 sunscreens available for purchase in 2025. The EWG report revealed that just one-fourth of sunscreens on store shelves provide safe and effective protection.

- **Broad-spectrum** protection works against UVA (skin cancer and premature aging) and UVB (sunburn rays).
- **SPF** is the level of protection against UVB rays. Experts recommend using sunscreen with an SPF value of at least 30.
- **Water-resistant** sunscreen needs to be reapplied, depending on the brand, after 40 or 80 minutes of swimming or excessive swimming.
- Sunscreens maintain their full strength for three years but always check the **expiration date**.

Remember that not all sunscreens are created equal, so it's about finding the one you need for the specific weather and activity. Sunscreen labels must follow specific guidelines, so here's what they exactly mean:

Routinely inspect your skin for any spots or changes in color or appearance. If you have any concerns, talk to your doctor.

Recipe of the Month

Avocado and Corn Salsa

Makes: 5 servings

Ingredients

- 1 avocado (diced)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup frozen corn kernels (thawed)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup grape tomatoes (quartered)
- 1 Tbsp. fresh cilantro (chopped)
- 2 tsp. lime juice
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt

Preparations

1. Toss the avocado, corn, tomatoes, cilantro, lime juice and salt in a medium bowl.
2. Chill for one hour and then serve.

Nutritional Information

(per serving)

Total calories	67
Total fat	4 g
Protein	1 g
Sodium	119 mg
Carbohydrate	8 g
Dietary fiber	3 g
Saturated fat	1 g
Total sugars	1 g

Source: MyPlate



MENTAL HEALTH MINUTE

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The Benefits of Outdoor Activities

Planning outdoor activities to improve your mental health may sound simple, but the hustle and bustle of daily life can make it difficult to budget time for nature walks and similar outings. However, finding the time is crucial, as the simple act of stepping outside can have profound mental health benefits.

Outdoor activities contribute to your overall health, which in turn positively impacts your mental well-being. One study found that people who spent at least 120 minutes per week in natural environments reported a significant boost in health and well-being. As such, embracing the outdoors may help:

- **Calm the mind.** Immersion in nature provides a break from technology, allowing your mind to rest and helping you feel more relaxed.
- **Improve cognitive function.** Research by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service found that spending time in nature can rejuvenate and enhance your cognitive abilities, improving attention and concentration.
- **Combat anxiety and depression.** Studies show

that sunlight can help reduce depression and anxiety symptoms (e.g., low mood and fatigue). Exposure to nature also boosts serotonin, a neurotransmitter that can positively impact your mood.

- **Promote restful sleep.** Outdoor activities often involve physical exercise, which can lead to better sleep. Good sleep is essential for maintaining mental health and managing mental illnesses.
- **Boost self-esteem.** Physical activity and time spent outdoors can positively influence self-esteem. A report from the University of Essex found that just five minutes of “green exercise” (activities done in natural settings) can improve your mood and self-esteem.

Incorporating more outdoor time into daily life may seem challenging, but you can do it with some mindful planning. For example, begin with short outings. Start by regularly taking 10-minute walks and gradually increasing duration and frequency. By taking small steps and partaking in activities that work for your lifestyle, you may kickstart a habit that can greatly improve your mental well-being.

Good Stress vs. Bad Stress

Not all stress is bad. Eustress, or “good stress,” can be beneficial and invigorating. It’s the kind of stress that pushes you to perform better, encourages growth, and helps you achieve your goals or overcome challenges. On the other hand, distress or “bad stress” can negatively impact your health and well-being, often leading to anxiety, depression and physical health issues. Distress is typically what people are referring to when they’re feeling stressed.

Stress is common and healthy; it’s your body’s way of responding to threats, challenges and demands. Understanding the difference between good and bad stress is crucial for maintaining a balanced and productive life. Here are some ways to differentiate between distress and eustress:

- **Emotional response—** Eustress typically feels exciting and motivating, whereas distress feels overwhelming and anxiety-inducing.
- **Physical symptoms—** Eustress may lead to positive physical responses like increased energy.

Distress can cause symptoms such as headaches, fatigue and muscle tension.

- **Impact on performance—** Eustress enhances performance and productivity, while distress can hinder your ability to function effectively.

Finding the Sweet Spot of Stress

Finding the sweet spot of stress involves embracing eustress while managing distress. Here are some tips to help you harness the power of good stress and stay motivated:

- Break down large tasks into smaller, manageable steps.
- Take on challenging work projects that help you learn new skills or something that plays to your strengths.
- Focus on the potential benefits and growth opportunities that come with challenges.

The goal is to reach outside your comfort zone so you’re challenged but not to the point of being overwhelmed.

For further guidance, contact a mental health professional.

Take Charge of Your Health



How to Read Food Labels

Reading nutrition facts labels is a crucial part of maintaining healthy eating habits. It allows you to make informed choices about the foods and beverages you eat and compare the nutritional value of different foods. These labels can be a little confusing, but by breaking them down, you'll better understand the value the information provides in helping you maintain a healthy diet.

Here are some tips for reading a nutrition facts label:



Start with the serving size. A serving size is the recommended amount that one person should consume. It's important to pay attention to the serving size because the item you're eating may contain several servings.



Look at total calories. This number indicates the total number of calories and the number of calories derived from fat that are contained in one serving of food. You should aim to get only about 30% of your daily calories from fat.



Check the nutrient list. Companies must list the amount of fat, cholesterol, sodium, total carbohydrates, dietary fiber, sugars, protein, vitamins A and C, calcium and iron contained in one product serving. Some labels also display trans fats.



Limit certain nutrients. While you want to consume more dietary fiber, vitamin D, calcium, iron and potassium, you should try to limit saturated fat, sodium and added sugars.



Understand percent daily values. These percentages explain how one serving nutritionally fits into a daily diet of 2,000 calories. For example, 5% or less is low, and 20% or more is high.