

CONSUMER CONNECTION

SUMMER SIZZLE

KEEPING YOURSELF AND
YOUR PETS SUN-SAFE



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GET YOUR CAR
READY FOR

Summer driving

Summer's here. That means many people will pack up their cars and hit the road, heading to deserts, beaches, and everywhere in between.

However, nothing can ruin an exciting road trip more than having your car break down.

Don't get stuck on the side of the road in need of a tow. You can ease the stress and have success by prepping your vehicle to get it road trip-ready.

The Department of Consumer Affairs' Bureau of Automotive Repair (BAR) website, www.bar.ca.gov, offers suggestions on how to get your car in tip-top shape so it can withstand the rigors of the hot, summer weather prior to embarking on your fun in the sun.

Remember, if you're planning to take your vehicle to be checked or serviced by an automotive specialist or repair shop, you can always view and verify the status of the license by logging on to the BAR website and clicking on the "License Search" button, or by calling (800) 952-5210.

BAR offers additional year-round car care tips in the following Q&A.

1. What is the number one thing that most people take for granted before they head out in their cars for their summer road trip vacation?

Many people take for granted that their tires are properly inflated. Consumers should regularly check the air pressure in all tires, including the spare. It is important to check tires for uneven or excessive tread wear. Also, have the tires rotated at the manufacturer's recommended intervals.



2. What advice would BAR give consumers who have brand-new cars and are heading out on a long road trip?

Consumers should become familiar with the vehicle before beginning a trip. Knowing how to operate the vehicle and its accessories minimizes distractions and allows consumers to focus on their driving. The owner's manual has detailed information about the features of the vehicle and should be reviewed frequently.

3. Is summer weather harsh on vehicles?

Yes, summer heat can be rough on vehicles. High temperatures can break down fluids and lubricants more quickly, which leads to more wear and tear on the engine. It is important to be familiar with the vehicle's owner's manual and follow the manufacturer's recommended maintenance schedule.

4. Most people don't think much about their windshield wipers until the fall/winter, rainy season. But there are summer rains. Should they make sure these are operable when traveling as well?

Many people assume their windshield wiper blades do not need to be replaced until fall or winter. However, consumers should replace worn or cracked wiper blades and refill the wiper fluid during the summer months to ensure they are prepared for unpredictable weather conditions.

5. What kind of essential maintenance can consumers do themselves? What things should an automotive specialist take care of?

Consumers should familiarize themselves with the vehicle's owner's manual and follow the manufacturer's recommended maintenance schedule for the vehicle. A safety kit should be kept in the trunk of the vehicle for emergency situations. If the vehicle's check engine light or malfunction indicator light is on, consumers should have the problem diagnosed and repaired by a licensed automotive repair dealer.

6. Should consumers make a checklist so they don't miss anything?

Consumers can reference the vehicle's owner's manual, which contains important information and instructions regarding the vehicle's maintenance and service needs. Consumers can also take advantage of the vehicle's built-in maintenance reminder system. These easy-to-use systems are included in many new vehicles and can help with staying up-to-date on important maintenance services.

7. What other helpful tips or information is available for consumers?

BAR offers complaint resolution to help consumers resolve problems with an automotive repair dealer. To file a complaint, visit www.bar.ca.gov or call (800) 952-5210.

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How to Stress Less

Meditate, take deep breaths, do yoga—these are today’s much-discussed methods to manage and reduce stress. Some or all of those methods may work for you, but if not or they don’t appeal to you, there are plenty of other options.

Stress from time to time is inevitable and may temporarily affect your mood, sleep and eating patterns, and energy level. However, if you’re experiencing continuous stress and it’s left untreated, it can suppress your immune system, leaving you at risk for a host of health problems, including colds and flu, headaches, heart disease,

high blood pressure, diabetes, and mental health issues such as depression and anxiety, according to the National Institute of Mental Health.

Board of Psychology President Stephen Phillips, J.D., Psy.D., agrees, saying “Extended stress over time or chronic stress has a negative impact on both mind and body. It can exacerbate pre existing physical and psychological challenges and has been shown to cause serious emotional, behavioral, social, and physical health problems. Chronic stress must be actively addressed and challenged to avoid these untoward effects.”

Beyond the stress-reducers mentioned earlier, what else can you do? What works for one person may not work for another, so be open to different methods.



Relaxation techniques: The Mayo Clinic recommends autogenic relaxation methods, which means they come from within you. You use both visual imagery and body awareness; for example, imagine a peaceful setting, such as a forest or the beach, while taking slow and measured breaths. Another technique is progressive muscle relaxation, in which you focus on tensing and then relaxing each muscle group. The Mayo Clinic emphasizes that relaxation techniques are learned skills that take practice so be patient.

Acupuncture: According to the California Acupuncture Board, your body responds to stress by releasing a number of hormones. Acupuncture, especially electro acupuncture, can help block the elevated levels of these stress hormones. Before seeing an acupuncturist, check the status of his or her license by visiting the Acupuncture Board's website at www.acupuncture.ca.gov.

Repetitive actions: From washing dishes to raking leaves, completing chores can provide stress relief. A February 2016 *Psychology Today* article states that these types of repetitive actions help reduce nervousness, thus decreasing feelings of stress. Other actions such as doing needlework or knitting or working on adult coloring books can also help take you to a relaxed state.

Talking about it: Open up to a friend, family member, teacher, counselor, or other person you trust to discuss what's causing your stress. If you decide to seek professional help, remember to check the status of their license: For a psychologist, visit the Board of Psychology's website at www.psychology.ca.gov, and for a marriage and family therapist or professional clinical counselor, visit the Board of Behavioral Sciences website at www.bbs.ca.gov.

Positive self-talk: The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends using positive self-talk to calm yourself down. For example, instead of "everything is going to go wrong," go with "I can handle things if I take one step at a time." Another example is instead of "I hate it when this happens," say "I know how to deal with this; I've done it before." Practice positive self-talk every day before you go to bed or while at your desk, or anywhere you seem to have negative thoughts.



Naturopathic medicine: According to the Naturopathic Medicine Committee (Committee), naturopathic medicine, with its focus on preventive care, has a number of strategies for decreasing stress. They include lifestyle coaching (for example, integration of exercise, meditation, and other stress-relieving techniques into your daily routine); botanical medicines, which are safe alternatives to potentially addictive prescription drugs; and diet and nutrition management. Check the status of a naturopathic doctor by visiting the Committee's website at www.naturopathic.ca.gov.

Finding joy: AHA recommends that whether it's having a cup of tea, listening to music, reading a magazine, or taking a walk, do something—even if it's for only 15 minutes—that you enjoy and find relaxing.

Keep in mind, however, that although stress does get a bad rap most of the time, it's not necessarily all negative. You will experience stress at different times of your life; however, if managed properly, it can actually serve as a positive force to motivate you to perform when needed.

RESOURCES

Mayo Clinic: www.mayoclinic.org

National Institute of Mental Health:
www.nimh.nih.gov

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:
www.mentalhealth.gov



Taking Stress to the Teen Level

Between heavy schoolwork loads, highly competitive school and sports environments, and media pressures, there's a lot for young people to be stressed about. The 2013 American Psychological Association (APA) *Stress in America* survey found that teenagers are the most stressed-out age group in the country.

A vast number of teens aren't getting enough sleep or exercise, and have poor diets or are skipping meals altogether. Too much screen time is also in the mix; according to Common Sense Media, a nonprofit focused on helping families develop healthy approaches to media and technology, U.S. teens are consuming about nine hours of media per day.

To help your teen manage stress, introduce methods explained in the main article—they apply to kids as well as grown-ups. However, since teens are still not yet adults, they also need additional help and guidance.

"In order to break this cycle of stress and unhealthy behaviors as a nation, we need to provide teens with better support and health education at school and home, at the community level and in their interactions with healthcare professionals," stated APA CEO and Executive Vice President Norman B. Anderson, Ph.D., in a news release.

For more information about helping your teen manage stress, visit the American Psychology Association's website at www.apa.org.



Summer weather beckons extreme outdoor activities, which can lead to all sorts of injuries when you're not wearing the best footwear. As a result, summer is also a busy time for many podiatrists because some of those ailments are directly related to footwear choice and could be prevented.

"For people with 'normal feet,' without flatfoot deformity or high arch deformity, using flip-flops occasionally is fine," said Carl R. Wagreich, DPM, Board of Podiatric Medicine (Board) Consultant. "The main mechanical problem with flip-flops is that they provide no stability or support for unstable feet. This can lead to aggravation of many problems related to foot instability."

Researchers at Auburn University found flip-flop wearers took shorter strides, struck their heels against the ground with less vertical force, and scrunched their toes up during the leg's swing phase. Apparently, feet land on the outside and then roll inwards, putting all the pressure on the big toe. This constant rolling puts pressure on the ankle joint, causing it to weaken.

These repetitive motions can result in a myriad of problems, such as:

- Bunion and hammertoe development
- Plantar fasciitis heel pain
- Flattened arches
- Metatarsal stress fractures



- Back pain
- Tendonitis
- Sprained ankles
- Shin splints
- Fat pad degradation in the foot


“Flip-flops leave the foot more vulnerable to injury when something sharp, like a rock or a piece of glass, gets into them or when your foot meets an immovable object, like the corner of a coffee table. Biomechanics experts say that wearing flip-flops also prolongs the mid-stance part of the gait cycle,” explained Michael Zapf, DPM, Board President. “This is important because when your foot first lands on the ground, it becomes a loose and flexible ‘bag of bones’ that transforms and adapts to changes in terrain, then becomes a rigid lever for ‘push off.’”

Think about it. There is a reason why construction workers wear steel-toe boots and not flip-flops on site. Exposed feet are more vulnerable to falling objects, stubbed toes, sunburn, bruises, lacerations, and bug bites. Podiatrists also see a lot of ingrown, bruised, or infected toenails this time of year, which wouldn’t happen with decent foot coverings.

Although there are limited scientific studies proving the increase in minor foot injuries related to flip-flop wear, New York’s Center for Podiatric Care and Sports Medicine reports at least one person comes into their podiatric offices with signs of flip-flop wear and tear each day from May through September.

“Anecdotally, podiatrists probably see more injuries from flip-flops than any other class of shoe gear,” said Neil Mansdorf, DPM, Board member.


Sweaty feet inside shoes may cause some foot fungus like athlete’s foot and toenail fungus, but exposed foot germs can be picked up by a host



and given a chance to transfer from one surface to the next. One study by the University of Miami yielded some alarming results when researchers discovered that one pair of flip-flops contained more than 18,000 bacteria, including respiratory germs from fecal matter and yeast infection-causing fungus. A similar study by reporters at the *New York Daily News* found 13,900 bacteria on a brand new pair of flip-flops worn around Coney Island, Prospect Park, and the subway for less than a week.

With all things considered, findings do not suggest that flip-flops should be thrown in the trash since

they are appropriate at the beach or on occasion. “As long as flip-floppers are sensible, they can continue to experience the sensual pleasure of walking almost barefooted,” said President Zapf. Furthermore, athletic footwear brands such as Nike and Adidas have recently enhanced flip-flop wearing comfort with somewhat cushy foot-friendly soles and insoles.



“As long as flip-floppers are sensible, they can continue to experience the sensual pleasure of walking almost barefooted.”

For the most part, correct footwear does matter to protect your health and comfort level at any age, so wearer beware.

Also, be sure your podiatrist’s license is in good standing by doing a license search on the Board website (www.bpm.ca.gov).

RESOURCES

The Center for Podiatric Care and Sports Medicine
<https://healingfeet.com/>

Auburn University
<http://wireeagle.auburn.edu>

HOME SECURITY OPTIONS BEYOND AN ALARM SYSTEM



Many families will take advantage of school breaks and warm weather to go on vacation this summer, but the prospect of leaving a home empty for a week or more and a potential target for burglars can be a source of worry.

Having a home alarm system installed is an option, but professionally installed systems can be costly (hundreds or even thousands of dollars), and agreeing to a monthly fee monitoring contract may be necessary. For consumers who want, and can afford, the most comprehensive home security available, a professionally installed and monitored alarm system is recommended. To verify the license standing of an alarm company or alarm agent, visit the Bureau of Security and Investigative Services at www.bsis.ca.gov.

Other low- or no-cost options are available for making a home safer and, in turn, providing peace of mind.

NO COST

- Be sure sliding glass doors are secure. Many older sliders are easy to open from the outside. Use a broom handle or dowel in the track to prevent the door from being opened and deter potential intruders.
- Alert neighbors to your travel schedule and ask them to be aware of any people or vehicles at your home that seem out of place.
- Have a neighbor pick up your mail and newspapers, or arrange to have them stopped while you're away.
- Trim any overgrown plants or hedges around the home—particularly in front and near windows—that would provide cover for a burglar.

LOW COST

Make sure your home is well-lighted outside.

Motion-detecting lights are inexpensive and an easy way to illuminate anyone approaching the house. Light and noise are a burglar's two worst fears.

Be sure it looks like you are home. Lights, music, and TVs can be put on timers to create an atmosphere of business-as-usual living, particularly after dark.

Make access to ground-floor windows a painful proposition. Planting rose bushes or some other thorny plant (such as firethorn or holly) under a window will likely be enough to persuade a would-be robber to move on to an easier mark.

Signs of trouble. A "Beware of Dog" sign or one suggesting the home is protected by a security system is probably enough to deter a potential burglar.

For those willing to spend a few hundred dollars, do-it-yourself home security can take a huge technological leap. DIY home security options now include kits, cameras, and all-in-one units that are more affordable than ever.

UNDER \$250

Video doorbells. Early versions of doorbell cameras produced mixed results, with many proving to be unreliable and difficult to use. The latest generation of video doorbells, however, have shown drastic improvements, allowing homeowners to preview (and in some cases talk with) who's at their door before answering, but also providing consumers with a greater sense of control, surveillance, and security. Features of high-end doorbell cameras include easy set up and use via a smartphone app, excellent picture and audio quality, motion detection, and customer support.

Indoor/outdoor cameras. Both indoor and outdoor home security cameras are available as stand-alone units with monitoring apps. Each type of camera has different styles within the group, but several features should be considered before purchasing either. Among the top features to review include motion detection (and if notifications are sent to you so the situation can be monitored), WiFi capability (for integration into a home network), field of view, night vision, movement (a camera that can pan or tilt can cover a larger area), and image resolution.

How much, if any, a consumer spends on home security should be dictated by what allows them to sleep well at night.

All-in-one systems. From companies such as Piper, these canister-type units pack everything into a single, eye-pleasing package. They come with pan-and-tilt cameras and built-in smart sensors capable of detecting motion, temperature, and humidity changes. The units have WiFi and can be integrated into home systems that allow users to control other automated devices such as locks and lights.

Kits. These range broadly, from inexpensive basic packages featuring small sensors that simply stick in the corner of a door or window to detect motion and emit a piercing sound, to comprehensive (pricier) customizable systems with cameras and sensors that can detect everything from motion to smoke to carbon dioxide. Many kits come with optional live monitoring for a small monthly fee, and some include cameras capable of night vision and smartphone apps.

Home security experts say it's important for consumers to determine the level of security they need in order to feel safe and have peace of mind before outfitting a home. Some people may live simply with few valuable possessions that warrant a high level of security. Others may have a valuable jewelry collection or a home office with tens of thousands of dollars of technology equipment.

How much, if any, a consumer spends on home security should be dictated by what allows them to sleep well at night.





Buying a Home?

Do Your Homework First

Purchasing a home may be one of the biggest financial decisions you will ever make, so it's wise to do your homework before making an offer on the home of your dreams.

First, you have to figure out what you can afford and decide whether your house payments, property tax, insurance, and expenses will fit into your monthly budget. Then, get your financing in order by getting pre-approved for a loan through a lender or licensed mortgage broker.

Next, choose a qualified real estate agent to help you with the purchase of your new home. Before hiring your agent, check his or her license status by going to the California Bureau of Real Estate's website at www.calbre.ca.gov. Agents performing real estate activities must be in a "licensed" status.

When you are ready to start house-hunting, think with your head and not just with your heart. Here are some tips for vetting a home before buying:

Check out the basics. Look beyond the fresh paint and impressive decorating, and see if the home appears well-maintained—that could save you money down the line. When entering a prospective home, ask yourself how you feel about the kitchen, which is the room homeowners tend to spend the most time in and can be the costliest room to remodel. Dated bathrooms can also be expensive to update. Now, check out the bedrooms to ensure they are the size you want, and find out if the home's closets, cupboards, and shelving meet your storage needs.

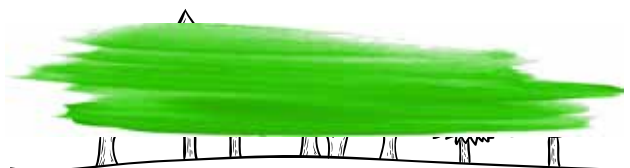
Be a snooper. Look under the sinks at pipes, and check for leaks, water damage, or mold. See if there are any exposed wires that could alert you to electrical problems. And be sure to be aware of how old the home's heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system is—they generally don't last more than 12-15 years. Aged and

What Can You Afford?

- Get your loan pre-approved by applying for a loan through a lender or licensed mortgage broker.
- Check the status of your mortgage broker's license by going to the Nationwide Multistate Licensing System (NMLS) Consumer Access website at www.nmlsconsumeraccess.org.
- If you have an issue with your credit, debt, or income, the lender or broker can provide you with suggestions to help improve your credit score or identify the problems that may hinder your ability to obtain a loan.
- Be aware that mortgage payments not only include principal and interest on the loan, but can also include taxes, insurance, homeowner association dues, and private mortgage insurance (PMI).

outdated systems will eventually need repairs or replacement, which is expensive.

Follow your nose. Does the home have any funky smells that hint at a possibly costly problem? Smoke, mildew, pet odors, and sewage can create unpleasant odors that can indicate trouble.



Now, look up. Determine how old the roof is and how much longer it will last. Has it leaked and caused any damage? Replacing a roof is expensive and something to factor in before making an offer on a home.

Survey the yards. See if the front- and backyard will meet your current and future needs, such as room for pets, children's activities, and possibly a garden or pool. Check if the fences are in solid shape, if the exterior of the home has been maintained, and if your neighbors are too close for comfort.

Location, location, location. Look beyond the home to the street it's on; check out the neighborhood and surrounding community. Do some legwork to determine if the neighborhood is safe, if the other homes are well-maintained, and what traffic patterns are at various times of day. Get the lowdown on the school districts—even if you have no children, resale value is higher in neighborhoods located in desirable school districts.

Understand local zoning. Find out if there are any nuisances in the area that may not be required to be listed in the disclosures, such as a nearby landfill. Know before making an offer whether the home is in a flood, fire, or earthquake zone.

And once you've decided this house is for you, have a home inspection done. A qualified home inspector may find problems you missed that can be corrected while the home is in escrow. Remember that knowledge is power when purchasing the home of your dreams.

How to Find a Qualified Real Estate or Loan Professional

- Request a copy of their errors and omissions (E&O) insurance policy (E&O insurance is recommended, not required).
- Verify a public license by going to CalBRE's website, www.calbre.ca.gov.
- Ask to view his or her résumé.
- Request references and contact them.
- Find out if they have any additional professional designations, titles, or professional membership positions.
- Ask for a presentation of why you should hire them.
- If the agent has disciplinary action on his or her license, carefully consider the type of discipline and how long it has been since the action.
- Check with the Better Business Bureau and local chamber of commerce, and do an online search for ratings and complaints.
- Ask about their experience, and thoroughly evaluate if they are the right fit for you.

Related California Bureau of Real Estate Publications

Financial Sense to White Picket Fence:
A Financial Literacy Reference Guide
www.dre.ca.gov/files/pdf/re18.pdf

Real Estate Matters: Finding the
Right Real Estate Agent
www.dre.ca.gov/files/pdf/re16.pdf

Sources of Home Loans
www.dre.ca.gov/files/pdf/re22.pdf

What You Should Know: Using the
Services of a Mortgage Broker
www.dre.ca.gov/files/pdf/re35a.pdf



Let's face it, soaring temperatures during the summer months can be downright uncomfortable—even dangerous—for pets and people alike.

Experts say animals are even more prone to heatstroke than humans. Apparently, when animals pant to evaporate moisture from their lungs, this takes heat away from their body, but if the humidity is too high and they are unable to cool themselves, their temperature can reach dangerous levels—very quickly.

PROTECT PETS DURING THE SUMMER SIZZLE

Animals are also more susceptible if they are very old, very young, overweight, don't exercise frequently, or have heart or respiratory disease.

“Be especially cautious with breeds of dogs with known breathing problems, especially brachiocephalic breeds (short nosed)—bulldogs, pugs, Chows, Boston terriers and others,” said Beth M. Parvin, DVM Consultant, Veterinary Medical Board.



According to the Humane Society of the United States, signs of heatstroke include:

- Heavy panting
- Glazed eyes
- Rapid heartbeat
- Difficulty breathing
- Excessive thirst
- Lethargy
- Fever
- Dizziness
- Lack of coordination
- Profuse salivation
- Vomiting
- A deep red or purple tongue
- Seizure
- Unconsciousness

JUST SAY NO TO PETS IN PARKED CARS

Don't risk leaving your pet in a parked car for a minute, or even with the car running and the air conditioner on. On a warm day, temperatures inside a vehicle can rise rapidly to dangerous levels. On an 85-degree day, for example, the temperature inside a car with the windows opened slightly can reach 102 degrees within 10 minutes. After 30 minutes, the temperature could reach 120 degrees.

As a result, in dire situations, Assembly Bill 797 allows a good Samaritan to remove an animal from a vehicle in order to save an animal from overheating. Details of the bill can be found here:

http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201520160AB797.

RETHINK EXERCISE ON HOT DAYS

Be cautious when exercising your pet on hot days. Adjust intensity and duration of exercise in accordance with the temperature. On very hot days, limit exercise to early morning or evening hours, and be especially careful with pets with white-colored ears, which are more susceptible to skin cancer. And remember, asphalt gets hot, even on milder days, and can quickly burn your pet's paws, so walk your dog on the grass if possible and carry cool water for you and your pet.

USE THAT SHADE

Any time your pet is relaxing outside, make sure it has protection from heat and sun with tree shade and tarps, which are ideal because they don't block air flow. And don't stick Fido in the doghouse because it won't provide relief from heat—in fact, it makes it worse.

THE BIG COOL DOWN

Frozen pet treats will help to drop body temperatures quickly, and you can also keep your pet from overheating indoors or out with a cool water soak/spritz or a pet cooling mat.

TREATING HEATSTROKE

If you suspect your dog may be suffering from heatstroke:

- Move your pet into the shade or an air-conditioned area.
- Apply ice packs or cold towels to its head, neck, and chest, or run cool (not cold) water over it.
- Let it drink small amounts of cool water or lick ice cubes.
- Take it directly to a veterinarian.

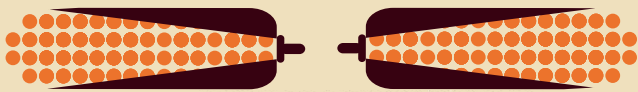
Also, be sure your veterinarian's license is in good standing by doing a license search on the Veterinary Medical Board's website (www.vmb.ca.gov).

RESOURCES

The Humane Society of the United States
www.humanesociety.org

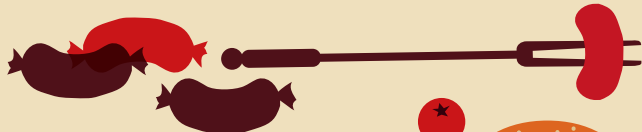
Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association
www.hsvma.org





FOOD POISONING IN THE

Summertime



What's not to like? Potato salad, barbecued chicken, and fresh fruits and veggies. Warm weather inspires outdoor outings equipped with picnic favorites.

But with summertime staples, perhaps prepared and eaten outdoors, come possible health risks.

If food is handled or cooked improperly, it can become contaminated and there's a chance you can get a foodborne illness.

WHO'S AT RISK?

Anyone is susceptible. However, because most people have a healthy immune system, they wouldn't necessarily get sick from contaminated foods.

However, there are some who are at greater risk: pregnant women, young children, older adults, and those with weakened immune systems by disease (e.g., cancer, HIV/AIDS, and diabetes) or medical treatment, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Those in at-risk categories should take care to avoid foods that are more prone to carrying harmful bacteria. Foods to avoid include raw or undercooked meat, raw fish and shellfish, unpasteurized milk and milk products, soft cheeses such as brie and feta, unwashed vegetables, deli meats, and raw sprouts.

SYMPTOMS AND TREATMENT

Food poisoning symptoms depend on the source of contamination. However, most types of food poisoning lead to:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Stomach pain and cramps
- Fever
- Headache





IS IT FOOD POISONING OR STOMACH FLU?

Think back to what you ate over the past few hours, and find out if others who ate the same food item got sick as well. Generally, you'll get sick within four to six hours of eating the contaminated food. The incubation period for stomach flu is 24 to 48 hours, and unlike food poisoning, which generally goes away within a couple days, stomach flu can last up to 10 days. If you do think you have stomach flu versus food poisoning, be sure to stay home to avoid getting others sick.

Whether you think you have a foodborne illness or the stomach flu, be sure to stay hydrated and contact your doctor if you aren't getting better within a few days.

Your symptoms will generally develop within four to six hours after getting infected and shouldn't last for more than two days. If you're sick longer than two days, call your doctor. You can check the status of your doctor's license by visiting the Medical Board of California's website, www.mbc.ca.gov.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, foodborne illnesses are common—one in six Americans get sick from contaminated food or beverages. Although most people fully recover, for some, it can lead to kidney failure, chronic arthritis, brain and nerve damage, or even death. If you have symptoms such as bloody vomit or stools, diarrhea for more than three days, signs of dehydration (e.g., increased thirst, dry mouth, weakness, dizziness), extreme pain or severe abdominal cramping, and a fever of higher than 101.5 degrees, get in touch with your doctor right away.

Above all, stay hydrated with water. When you're feeling better, you can start eating bland foods, such as crackers and broth.

PRECAUTIONS

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Foodsafety.gov website describes "4 Simple Steps to Food Safety":

- 1) **Clean:** Before, during, and after cooking, wash hands, surfaces, and utensils. Wash your fruits and vegetables, but not meat, poultry, or eggs.
- 2) **Separate:** Don't cross-contaminate. Use a separate cutting board and plates for raw meat, poultry, seafood, or eggs. Keep those items separate from other foods in the fridge as well.
- 3) **Cook:** Use a food thermometer to make sure that food has gotten to a high enough temperature to get properly cooked. The "danger zone" is between 40 and 140 degrees, so cooked food should be kept at a temperature higher than 140 degrees.
- 4) **Chill:** Refrigerate promptly. With summer weather, foodborne bacteria can grow at a fast rate. Food poison-inducing bacteria can grow in perishable foods within two hours if you don't properly refrigerate.

Of course, if you're at a potluck or a picnic where others provide the food, you won't know and have control of how the food is prepared and stored—barring an awkward interrogation of the host. But survey the situation; if the food looks and smells off, and you're eating outside on a warm day, you may want to pass on the potato salad.

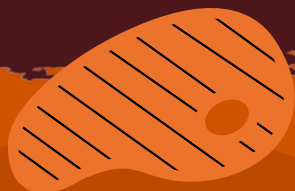
RESOURCES

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Foodsafety.gov: www.foodsafety.gov

U.S. Food and Drug Administration: www.fda.gov

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov

U.S. Department of Agriculture: www.askkaren.gov





BUREAU OF MEDICAL CANNABIS REGULATION RELEASES PROPOSED REGULATIONS

The Department of Consumer Affairs' Bureau of Medical Cannabis Regulation (BMCR/Bureau) recently released proposed medical cannabis regulations that included general provisions applicable to all Bureau licenses, distributors, transporters, dispensaries, and testing laboratories. This launched the 45-day public comment period that extended to early June.

The Bureau also held public hearings in June during which feedback from all stakeholders and interested parties was collected on the proposed rules.

"The proposed regulations for medical cannabis are the result of countless hours of research, stakeholder outreach, informational sessions, and pre-regulatory meetings all across the state," said Bureau Chief Lori Ajax. "And while we have done

quite a bit of work and heard from thousands of people, there is still so much more to do. In order to make our program successful, we still need the public's feedback."

To review the proposed text for medical regulations for licensing dispensaries, distribution, and transporters, and also for testing laboratories, visit the BMCR website (www.bmcr.ca.gov). Links to all key Bureau regulations information, including the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and the Initial Statement of Reasons, can also be found on the homepage.

You can also find these documents and important information by visiting the new California Cannabis Portal at www.cannabis.ca.gov.

MAJOR REGULATIONS THEMES

For all Bureau licensees, the proposed regulations include details on the following topics:

- Ownership and its definitions, as well as submission requirements for fingerprints and information regarding any criminal convictions
- Convictions and reasons for license denial and how to submit evidence of rehabilitation

To review the proposed text for medical regulations for licensing dispensaries, distribution, and transporters, and also for testing laboratories, visit the BMCR website (www.bmcr.ca.gov).

- Requirements to continue operations while an application is pending
- Requirements for priority licensing
- Security requirements for all licensed premises
- Distributors' responsibilities for testing and quality assurance for all medical cannabis goods and packaging and labeling rules
- Transporters and allowed means of transportation, required security measures, storage requirements, age requirements, and manifests
- Dispensary rules, including hours of operation, prohibition of free samples, as well as packaging and labeling on premises, sales limitations, delivery requirements, and additional child-resistant packaging for purchases

For testing laboratories, the proposed regulations include the following topics:

- Provisional licensing
- Sampling requirements and limitations, sizing, transportation, storage, and documentation
- Tests performed and substances to test for
- Certificate of analysis generation and requirements

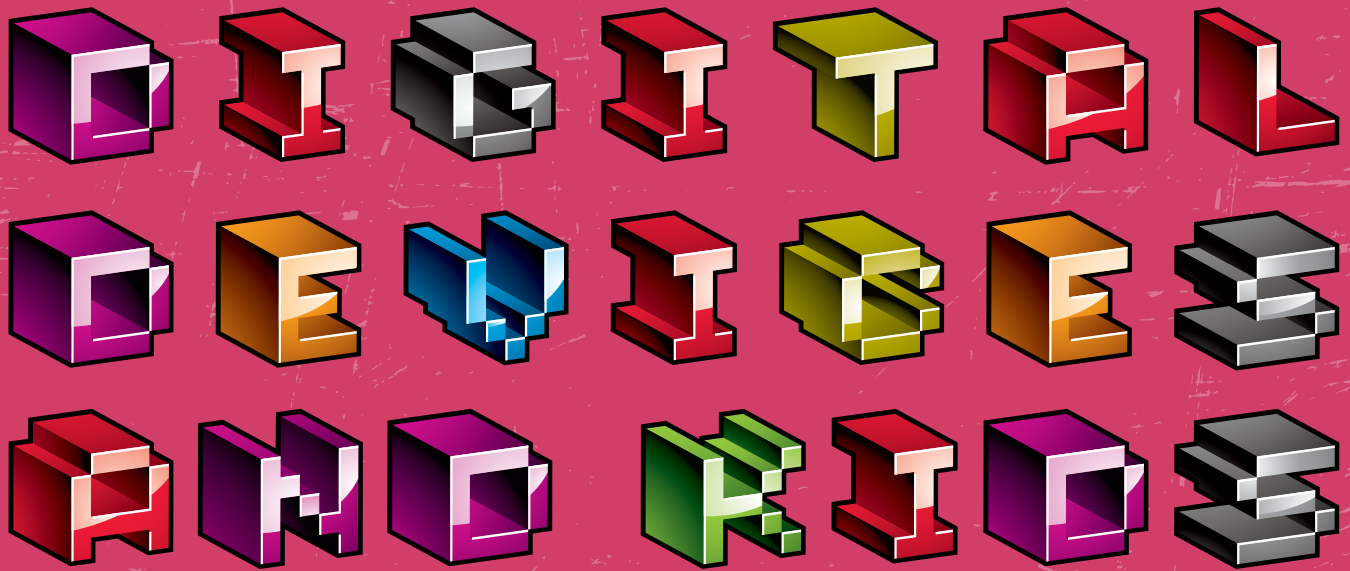
- Quality assurance and quality control requirements
- Proficiency testing requirements, reporting, and remediation
- Testing laboratory personnel requirements for education, experience, and training

GET INVOLVED!

Although the first 45-day comment period is closed, if any modifications are made as a result of the public feedback received during the public comment period, revised proposed regulations will be published and a new comment period will begin (45 days for major changes; 15 days for minor ones).

Get involved in the regulatory process by following the steps listed on BMCR's website (www.bmcr.ca.gov) on the home page under "How to Get Involved in the Regulatory Process"; here you'll find explanations on what to include in your public comments, as well as how and when to submit them.

For additional information about BMCR or to subscribe to e-mail alerts to hear about updates as they become available, please visit www.bmcr.ca.gov.



HOW TO MAINTAIN A HEALTHY BALANCE

What do leaders of some of the most influential and largest technology companies, such as Twitter and Apple, have in common? They have imposed restrictions on their own families regarding the use of electronic devices in their homes, or banned them altogether.

Many digital media applications and platforms are designed to promote addiction. According to a February 2014 *Psychology Today* article, kids' use of electronic devices can lead to craving more and more use of their devices, as well as an impairment of their dopamine function. *Psychology Today* defines dopamine as "a neurotransmitter that helps control the brain's reward and pleasure centers." The article cited research on video games that shows that dopamine is released during gaming. These dopamine-induced urges for gaming produce brain changes similar to drug cravings. This effect is why researchers have dubbed electronic devices "digital heroin" or "electronic cocaine."

Many studies connect kids' excessive screen-time usage to brain structure and function issues. For example, a 2016 report by Common Sense Media noted that some studies have found gray matter density in parts of the brain to be significantly lower in youths addicted to the Internet. Areas affected include the important frontal lobe, the area of the brain that undergoes massive changes from puberty until the mid-twenties. This area governs executive functions, such as planning, prioritizing, organizing, and impulse control. Volume loss was also seen in the striatum, which is involved in reward pathways and the suppression of socially unacceptable impulses. Lastly, a finding of particular concern was damage to an area known as the insula, which is involved in our capacity to develop empathy and compassion for others and our ability to integrate physical signals with emotion.

Over the last decade, the use of digital media has grown exponentially, and research suggests that this increased usage offers both benefits and risks to the overall well-being of children and teenagers.

According to a November 2016 American Academy of Pediatrics report, *Children and Adolescents and Digital Media*, evidence-based benefits identified from the use of digital and social media include early learning, exposure to new ideas and knowledge, increased opportunities for social contact and support, and new



Esc

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opportunities to access health promotion messages and information.



Conversely, risks include negative health effects on sleep, attention, and learning; higher incidence of obesity and depression; exposure to inaccurate, inappropriate, or unsafe content and contact; along with compromised privacy.

If you want your children to curb their electronic devices' use, then lead by example. According to Intel's 2011 *State of Mobile Etiquette* survey, 46 percent of kids have seen mom or dad use the phone during dinner and 49 percent do not see anything wrong with it. If your kids see you doing it, they assume it is approved behavior, which includes texting while driving, even at a stoplight.

Pediatrics, the official journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), suggests that parents create a family media plan to help prioritize daily activities with health, academic, and social goals being met first, and then media use time is considered. AAP's healthychildren.org website features a family media plan template and media time calculator to assist in creating a plan tailor-made to your family.

One thing is certain. Kids will be exposed to and use digital technology whether they are at home, in school, or among their peers. The important thing is for them to develop healthy relationships with technology. Parents can help limit their children's device usage to ensure moderate, smart use of their phones, computers, and tablets.

However, if you feel your child needs additional support, seek the help of a professional. The

California Department of Consumer Affairs

licenses professionals who treat those with psychological addiction through the Board of Psychology (www.psychology.ca.gov) and Board of Behavioral Sciences (www.bbs.ca.gov). Check a professional's license status via the appropriate board's website.





'Safe Sandal Season'




CAMPAIGN BRINGS AWARENESS TO POTENTIAL DANGERS OF PEDICURES

Proper salon cleaning procedures are essential to avoid serious diseases.

A pedicure can be a great way to pamper yourself, but did you ever think you could get a life-threatening infection from one? It's possible if the salon isn't using proper cleaning and disinfection techniques.

Lurking in the depths of a foot spa basin may be bacteria, fungal strains, and other dangerous microorganisms that thrive in warm, moist environments. Any break in the skin—insect bites, scratches, scabs, or razor cuts—are gateways for those microorganisms to cause infections. That's why whirlpool foot spas must be cleaned and disinfected after each use, at the end of each day, and every week.



The California Board of Barbering and Cosmetology (Board) licenses and regulates salons and the people in them who provide the services, and has established cleaning and sanitation procedures that are required by law for infection control. Its annual public education campaign—“Safe Sandal Season”—spreads the word on ways pedicure lovers can enjoy their pampering while protecting themselves at the same time.

Any foot basin that holds water must be cleaned with liquid soap and water, and then disinfected with an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered liquid disinfectant. The disinfectant must circulate through the equipment for a full 10 minutes between customers.

Watch this quick video before your next salon visit—it shows what has to be done and why it’s critical: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z7EsCELjldU>. The Board also offers these pre-pedi safety tips:

- Don’t shave or wax your legs 24 hours before a pedicure. If you have broken skin or lesions on your lower legs, don’t get a pedicure until they have healed.
- Always verify the licenses of anyone working on you. Current licenses are required to be posted on the wall in plain sight. You can verify licenses through the Board’s website and check to see if your salon or cosmetologist has been disciplined for rules violations. Being licensed with the Board ensures that the nail technician has received training in infection control and sanitation, and has passed a state board exam showing minimal competency.
- Ask how the salon cleans and disinfects its pedicure equipment. You also have the right to see the pedicure cleaning and disinfection log. Wiping out the tub between clients isn’t enough.

You may have also heard about “fish pedicures.” This involves putting your feet in a foot bath while live fish eat the dead skin off of them. It may sound gross, but it’s also illegal, because among other reasons, fish can’t be properly disinfected between customers. Learn more about the practice here: www.barbercosmo.ca.gov/forms_pubs/publications/fish_peds.pdf.

AT THE SALON

Hand washing: Another effective means of infection control is hand washing, and the Board requires all licensees to do this before working on a client. If you don’t see your nail technician do this, ask him or her to do so.

Once and done: Items that can’t be disinfected can’t be reused—this includes nail files, buffers, sand bands, cotton pads, and foot scrubbers. State law requires these to be thrown away after use.

No callus cutting: No razor-edged tool or other device (including a Ped Egg or a credo blade) can be used to remove calluses. Callus removal can only be done by a qualified medical professional.

Cleaning and storage: Tools that can be disinfected such as nail clippers and metal cuticle pushers must be cleaned with soap or detergent and water and then completely immersed in an EPA-registered disinfectant. Tools that have been used on a client or soiled in any manner must be stored in a container clearly marked as “soiled” or “dirty.” Disinfected tools must be stored in a clean, covered place that is labeled “clean.”

Stop the spread. The Board’s regulations also prohibit licensees from working on a person with an infection or communicable disease and from massaging any person’s skin if it is inflamed or infected. If you have athlete’s foot, eczema, or similar conditions, the nail technician must refuse service to protect you and other consumers.

To learn more about salon safety or to file a complaint, visit the Board of Barbering and Cosmetology’s website, www.barbercosmo.ca.gov.



SAVE YOUR SKIN

Protecting Against
the Sun's Harmful
UV Rays

The most common product people use to protect themselves against the sun and its damaging ultraviolet rays—sunscreen—is largely misunderstood.

SPF, the number used to gauge the degree of protection provided by sunscreen, is likely not as straightforward as you think, and many people fail to apply sunscreen correctly for adequate protection outdoors.

Limiting exposure to the sun is important not only to avoid wrinkles and other premature aging of the skin, but because the sun—and UV radiation from sunlamps or tanning beds—causes skin cancer. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates roughly 72,000 people in the U.S. were diagnosed with melanoma, the most serious form of skin cancer, in 2013, the most recent year statistics are available.

CLARIFYING SPF

A 2015 Northwestern University study of dermatology clinic patients highlighted the confusion about sunscreen SPF (Sun Protection Factor) ratings. A majority of the patients said they believed SPF 30 was twice as protective as SPF 15. While a logical thought, it is not even close to being true, according to the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD). SPF 30 is roughly 4 percent more protective than SPF 15, with SPF 15 filtering out around 93 percent of UV-B rays and SPF 30 filtering out around 97 percent. (UV-B rays are more damaging than UV-A rays but UV-A rays also contribute to sunburn and other skin damage.)

AAD recommends using sunscreen rated at least SPF 30, and the protection gap narrows even further with higher SPF ratings—SPF 50 blocks 98 percent of UV-B rays while SPF 100 filters out 99 percent of those rays.

Some experts believe sunscreens with lower ratings may actually be more effective in the long run because of the false sense of security that can come with applying high-number SPF products—consumers being less likely to reapply or limit time in the sun, both important aspects of the fight against skin damage and skin cancer.

OTHER KEY FACTORS

All sunscreens protect against the sun's UV-B rays, but only those labeled “broad spectrum” filter UV-A rays also. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which regulates sunscreen, recommends using broad spectrum sunscreens and requires this warning on ones that are not broad spectrum or don't have an SPF of at least 15: “This product has been shown only to help prevent sunburn, not skin cancer or early skin aging.”

Critical to adequate protection over an extended period is reapplication of sunscreen. The FDA recommends reapplying sunscreen every two hours regardless of SPF, which is not directly related to time of solar exposure but to amount of exposure (a clear day on the snow or water would require a higher SPF than a cloudy walk in the mountains for the same protection). Anyone swimming or sweating should reapply

sunscreen more often—some sunscreens are water resistant but none are waterproof—and manufacturers can no longer label sunscreens “waterproof,” “sunblock,” or make a claim of protection for more than two hours without reapplying.

The other critical component of maximizing sunscreen protection is to apply it liberally. The FDA says one ounce of lotion sunscreen (what it takes to fill a shot glass) is needed for an average-size adult to evenly cover the body effectively. Note that adequate protection can be particularly difficult if using a spray sunscreen with squirmy children.

The FDA emphasizes that all people regardless of skin tone are vulnerable to UV rays, and consumers should do more than apply sunscreen when protecting skin against premature aging and skin cancer:

- Limit time in the sun, especially between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., when the sun’s rays are most intense.
- Wear clothing to cover skin exposed to the sun such as long-sleeve shirts, pants, and broad-brim hats. All fabrics disrupt UV radiation to some degree, but clothing that does the best job carries an Ultraviolet Protection Factor (UPF) rating from 15 (good) to 50+ (excellent). Those most in need of UPF clothing include children and the fair-skinned.
- Sun protection is not just for the beach or pool. Even on an overcast day, 80 percent of the sun’s UV rays can get through the clouds. Stay in the shade as much as possible.
- Sunlight reflecting off snow, sand, or water further increases exposure to UV radiation and increases the risk of developing eye problems. Choose sunglasses with a UV A/UV-B rating of 100 percent to get the most protection. Dark-tinted sunglasses don’t necessarily shield eyes from UV rays. Light tints can offer the same protection as very dark lenses. Toy sunglasses for children may not have UV protection—be sure to look for the UV protection label.



Sun protection is not just for the beach or pool. Even on an overcast day, 80 percent of the sun’s UV rays can get through the clouds. Stay in the shade as much as possible.

- Avoid tanning beds and sunlamps. The World Health Organization has declared indoor tanning devices to be cancer-causing agents, and the AAD reports that studies have found a 59 percent increase in the risk of melanoma for those who have been exposed to UV radiation from indoor tanning.

A medical professional such as a dermatologist should be consulted for more information on fighting premature aging of the skin and skin cancer. The Medical Board of California (www.mbc.ca.gov) regulates dermatologists statewide, and standing of a dermatologist’s license can be checked at the Board’s website.

RESOURCES

American Academy of Dermatology:
<https://www.aad.org>

Food and Drug Administration:
<https://www.fda.gov>



EXECUTIVE OFFICER SPOTLIGHT:

LORI AJAX, CHIEF BUREAU OF MEDICAL CANNABIS REGULATION

1. What is your background, and how has it prepared you for this role?

I have been working in state government for over 20 years. Most of that time has been spent regulating the alcohol industry, starting as an investigator, then working my way through the ranks at the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control to ultimately serve as the Chief Deputy Director. Although alcohol and cannabis are different products, there are similarities in the process by which state government regulates licensees and the methods for keeping these products out of the hands of children.

During my career, I have also been heavily involved in stakeholder outreach and recognize the value of collaborative communication between the state and stakeholders. The [Bureau of Medical Cannabis Regulation's] Bureau's regulatory program can only be successful if we work together; therefore, continuing communication with stakeholders is an important piece of my job here at the Bureau. When I started, I had a lot to learn about the cannabis industry and am still learning from our stakeholders.

I consider it a great honor to have been entrusted with my role in this historic development in California. As we continue

to build the Bureau, I intend to draw on my regulatory experience and continue to learn from our stakeholders to develop a robust and effective cannabis program for California.

2. What is your vision for the Bureau?

The vision is simple: to develop a regulatory system that works for California's large and diverse population, with a focus on protecting the public, patients, and environment. Part of that vision is to continue building our exceptional staff to serve our licensees and communities.

3. In addition to building a solid staff, what else has the Bureau accomplished so far?

Most recently, the Bureau released proposed regulations for medical cannabis distributors, transporters, dispensaries, and testing laboratories. This effort included a tremendous amount of coordination with other state agencies involved in cannabis licensing, research, and significant public outreach. We held informational sessions in nine cities, pre-regulatory hearings in eight cities, and are currently in the midst of holding regulation hearings in four cities. These sessions were

designed to hear from a wide cross section of stakeholders, including business owners, patients, doctors, law enforcement, local governments, and concerned citizens.

The Bureau has proactively developed avenues of communication with stakeholders, either to provide or receive information. We regularly post updates through social media, e-mail, and the Web. The Bureau also led the development of the California Cannabis Portal, www.cannabis.ca.gov, which was launched in April and is serving as a one-stop resource for all state cannabis activity.

In addition, the Bureau has a dedicated team creating an online licensing system. This team has already performed critical steps in the development of the system to ensure it will be ready for January 1, 2018.

4. How has the industry responded to the idea of regulation?

The response has generally been positive. In our experience, most of the industry seems to welcome the opportunity to be licensed, like other industries in California that have state licensing programs. The industry has been incredibly cooperative and responsive to the Bureau by attending our statewide informational sessions, submitting comments, and providing critical insight into how their businesses work so we can build clear and concise regulations. The Bureau staff and I look forward to a continuing dialogue with the cannabis industry.

5. What are some of the challenges of building the first regulatory system in California for cannabis?

The timeline is obviously a challenge, and we are committed to making this goal. Additional pending legislation also means there are a lot of moving parts. We are staying focused and agile as an agency and have laid the groundwork for whatever comes our way. In the end, our primary goals have stayed the same—we want to ensure that cannabis is safe, the public is protected, the environment is protected, and the product stays out of children's hands.

We are staying focused and agile as an agency and have laid the groundwork for whatever comes our way.

6. What do you want the public to know about the Bureau?

We are committed to building a successful statewide regulatory system for cannabis, and we continue to encourage feedback from the public to assist with this endeavor.

7. In your view, what is the most important role of state government?

To create a transparent system that allows for the public, industry, and state government to work collaboratively to better California.


8. Complete this sentence: Most people don't know that I ...

Am a huge baseball fan. Go Royals!

9. Do you have a personal mantra?

"Let's just get it done!"

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