



It's been a hot summer so far across the Interior of BC and that means increased fire risk. Our first article contains helpful tips and links to help you prepare.

If you and your family like to cool down in a pool, water-park or lake it is important to always keep safety top of mind - see our second article for more information.

Rainy conditions followed by hot weather are the perfect conditions for mosquito breeding. Article three has tips to help you and your family avoid mosquito bites and WestNile virus.

Finally, how does a delicious and healthy snack that also cools you down sound? Fruit pops to the rescue in article four - like a popsicle but much healthier! So yummy!

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ARE YOU PREPARED FOR AN EVACUATION?

Hot dry conditions have raised the fire risk to extreme in many parts of our region. It is important that we are all prepared for the possibility of evacuation in our neighbourhoods by developing a household plan, putting together a grab and go kit and connecting with our neighbours.

Develop a plan: [PreparedBC: Household Preparedness Guide](#) and the [PreparedBC: Household Emergency Plan](#) are great resources to help you make a plan.



Put together a grab and go kit: Creating a home emergency kit doesn't need to take long. Follow this [guide](#) and remember to include personal items, such as prescription medications or an extra pair of eyeglasses.

Connect with your neighbours: When disaster strikes, the most immediate help will come from those around you - your neighbours. Connecting and building relationships with them today will mean a better response and faster recovery. Download the [In it Together: Neighbourhood Preparedness Guide](#) and start talking with the people next door. It will help you join forces so you all know what to do in an emergency, who to check on and what resources are nearby.

Tips for managing stress

The threat of wildfires can be very stressful for children and families. It is important parents don't assume children view the fire threat the same way adults do. What children see, think and feel can be very different. Our guide [Helping Kids Cope with Fire Threat - Helpful Information for you and your family has some important tips.](#)

Be safe and be prepared. More information on wildfires in BC can be found [here](#).

ALWAYS SUPERVISE AROUND WATER

Pools, lakes, water parks, and beaches mean summer fun and relief from hot weather. But water can also be dangerous for children if you don't take proper precautions.

Always watch children closely when they are in or near any water. Infants and toddlers are especially vulnerable - a small child can drown in less than 2 inches (6 centimeters) of water.

Take the following precautions to keep children safe around water:



Always supervise: All children should be supervised by an adult when they are in or around water. They should never be left alone - not even for a moment. Armbands, floating seats, water wings and other swimming aids are not intended to save lives.

Remember, although swimming lessons are a great opportunity to learn skills they are NOT a substitute for supervision. All children should be closely monitored.

Use a [properly fitted life jacket](#): Children who weigh over 9kgs (20lbs) should always use a life jacket or personal flotation device (PFD). There are no Canadian-approved life jackets for infants who weigh less than nine kilograms (20 pounds).

Keep kids close: Babies who cannot sit without support and are too young to wear a personal flotation device or life jacket should be held by an adult at all times. Toddlers should be within arm's reach of an adult.

For more information visit [Parachute Canada](#).

FIGHT THE BITE

Like it or not, mosquitos are here. Mosquitoes are more than just a nuisance - they can also carry diseases like West Nile virus. Follow these tips to protect your child from mosquito bites:

Install screens. Install and use screens on windows and doors to keep mosquitos out of your home.

Reduce time outdoors during peak mosquito times. Mosquitoes are most active in the evening and early morning, especially at dusk and dawn.



Cover up when outdoors. Light coloured and loose fitting full-length pants and long-sleeved shirts can keep mosquitoes from biting. Light blankets can also be used. Cover cribs and strollers with mosquito netting.

Use mosquito repellent safely. DEET is the most effective and widely used mosquito repellent. It is important to always follow the product recommendations/instructions on the label. DEET products are NOT recommended for children younger than 6 months old. In Canada, experts recommend using only repellents containing less than 10% DEET on children younger than 12 years old.

When applying DEET to children 6 months to 24 months of age:

- Use only when there is a high risk of insect bites.
- Use repellents with the lowest concentration of DEET available (usually 10% or less).
- As with all insect repellents, use sparingly - never apply to the hands or near the eyes.
- Apply no more than once a day, and avoid prolonged use.

When applying DEET to children 2 years to 12 years of age:

- Use repellents with the lowest concentration of DEET available (10% or less).
- Apply no more than 3 times a day, and avoid prolonged use.

There are insect repellents available in Canada that do not contain DEET. It is important to follow the instructions on the product label. More information on insect repellents can be found on [HealthLink BC](#).

COOL DOWN WITH A REFRESHING FRUIT POP

This tasty cool snack found on [HealthyFamiliesBC](#) is a healthier alternative to sugary popsicles. Give them a try!

Making fruit pops:

- Select at least one fruit and one 100% fruit juice for your base ingredients. Yogurt will add a creamy texture. Mint, cinnamon, or finely grated citrus peel (zest) can add pizzazz.
- Blend all your ingredients together, adjusting the texture to your preference. Blend longer for a smooth texture or



skip this step completely if you prefer frozen whole berries or sliced fruit.

- Pour your smoothie into cups or molds, insert sticks and freeze until solid.
- Once frozen solid, pour a little warm water over the outside of the cup or mold to loosen the fruit pop.

Here are some ideas to get you started.

- Peach yogurt + ripe peaches + orange juice
- Watermelon + coconut water + white grape juice + fresh mint
- Pineapple juice and chunks + watermelon + kiwi + strawberries
- Banana + mango + orange juice
- Plain yogurt + blueberries + grape juice
- Turn your favourite smoothie recipe into a fruit pop!

Looking for more healthy recipes? HealthyFamiliesBC has lots more in their [food and nutrition section!](#)

NEWS YOU CAN USE



[Wildfire Major Events](#) - Interior Health updates on wildfires and health impacts in our region.

[Take steps to prevent West Nile virus](#) - The risk of getting West Nile virus is highest from the end of July through August. Learn what you can do to reduce their risk of infection.

Sources and where to get more info

[Interior Health - Search for Health Centres under "location type"](#)

[Interior Health](#)

[HealthLinkBC](#)

[Parachute Canada](#)

This e-newsletter is an Interior Health project to provide quick and easy health tips for new parents and caregivers of children ages 0 to 2 years. Your comments and topic suggestions are welcome! Simply email us at: healthmatters@interiorhealth.ca.

For more info or to attend a free child health clinic, contact your local Public Health Centre. You can find contact info online at: www.interiorhealth.ca or look it up under Interior Health in the blue pages of your local phone book.

Sincerely,
Interior Health Authority

