



Summer Safety: Steps You Should Take to Help Stay Out of Harm's Way

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ST. LOUIS — Memorial Day is just around the corner, marking the unofficial start of summer and outdoor fun. The American Red Cross wants everyone to have a safe summer and offers tips and resources for the entire family.

WATER SAFETY

Before going in, on or around the water, every family member should become “water smart.” This starts with learning to be safe, making good choices, and learning to swim to at least achieve the skills of water competency. Everyone should be able to enter the water, get a breath, stay afloat, change position, swim a distance and then get out of the water safely. A variety of water safety [courses and resources](#) are available to help. To help keep your family safe, the Red Cross offers these tips:

1. Prevent unsupervised access to water. Fence pools and spas with adequate barriers and keep a constant eye for any water dangers such as portable splash pools/slides, buckets and bathtubs.
2. Adults should actively supervise children and stay within arm's reach of young children and new swimmers. Kids should follow the rules. Designate a “[water](#)

[watcher](#)” to keep a close eye and constant attention on children and weaker swimmers in and around the water until the next water watcher takes over.

3. Always wear a properly fitted U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket when on a boat and if in a situation beyond someone’s skill level.
4. Swim as a pair near a lifeguard’s chair — everyone, including experienced swimmers, should swim with a buddy even in areas supervised by lifeguards. Always maintain constant attention and actively supervise children even when lifeguards are present.
5. Download the Red Cross [Swim app](#) for safety tips, kid-friendly videos and activities, and take the free [Water Safety for Parents and Caregivers](#) online course.

GRILLING SAFETY

Grilling food is so popular that more than three-quarters of U.S. adults have used a grill — yet, grilling sparks more than [10,000 home fires](#) on average each year. To avoid this, the Red Cross offers these grilling safety tips:

1. Always supervise a barbecue grill when in use. Don’t add charcoal starter fluid when coals have already been ignited.
2. Never grill indoors — not in the house, camper, tent or any enclosed area.
3. Make sure everyone, including pets, stays away from the grill.
4. Keep the grill out in the open, away from the house, deck, tree branches or anything that could catch fire.
5. Use the long-handled tools especially made for cooking on the grill to help keep the chef safe.

Accidents and Emergencies Happen

The Red Cross has several resources to help people learn how to treat bee stings, burns and heat emergencies including [online and in-person training courses](#), a free [First Aid app](#) and a [First Aid Skill](#) for Amazon Alexa-enabled devices.

Help Save Lives this Summer

Part of a safe community is a strong blood supply for hospital patients. Give blood, platelets or plasma this summer to help ensure patients get the medical treatments they need. Download the Red Cross [Blood Donor app](#), visit redcrossblood.org or call 800-RED-CROSS for more information or to schedule your donation.

Follow COVID-19 Guidelines

Remember to review the latest [COVID-19 pandemic guidelines](#) from the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** with your family before you head out.

About the American Red Cross:

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies about 40 percent of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please visit redcross.org or cruzrojaamericana.org, or visit us on Twitter at [@RedCross](https://twitter.com/RedCross).