

Drownings Caused by Drinking

State health officials are concerned that alcohol played a major role in many of the drowning deaths in North Carolina, and they are cautioning citizens to stay out of the water if they have been drinking.

Regular recreation activities such as swimming, boating, skiing, diving, or fishing can turn into serious injury or even death if people combine these activities with alcohol.

When people drink alcohol, their judgment becomes impaired and they take risks they normally wouldn't take—such as jumping out of a boat and trying to swim to shore. Some times that shore line can be father away than it looks.

Adults aged 40-49 have the highest blood alcohol levels. Over one-third of the teenagers between the ages of 15-19 have alcohol in their blood, and 18 percent of them are legally intoxicated at time of drowning.

Most drownings are accidental. About 45 percent are associated with swimming or wading; 19 percent with watercraft such as boats' and about 7 percent result from motor vehicle accidents. More than half of accidental drownings occur in lakes, ponds, rivers, and streams.

There are several precautions people should take when participating in water activities:

- Do not mix alcohol and water activities.
- Avoid going into deep water if you do not know how to swim well.
- Use proper floatation devices when boating or skiing.
- Supervise children carefully when they're near the water, including bath tubs.
- Be sure that diving areas are deep enough.
- Take a buddy along.

Water recreation is fun

We see you in this picture.



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and good exercise if you avoid alcohol and follow safety precautions. Alcohol makes some people reckless—they do things they wouldn't ordinarily do, things that could cause them serious injury or even cost them their lives.

Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever

Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever is an infectious disease caused by a bacteria that is transmitted to humans by ticks.

With warmer weather and people getting outdoors, the chances of coming in contact with ticks which might transmit the disease are greater. Even though most of the cases of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever are concentrated in the piedmont counties along Interstate 85, ticks are found all across the state, and people should be on the lookout for them no matter what area they live in.

It's extremely important for people, particularly if they have some of the symptoms, to tell their doctor about any recent contact with ticks. This

way the physician can focus on the possibility of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. A tick must be attached for approximately five or six hours before it can transmit the disease, so prompt removal is important.

If possible, try not to touch the tick with your fingers. Use tweezers or tissue paper to avoid touching it. Slowly pull straight back when removing the tick. Don't twist or jerk because it could result in broken mouth parts being left in the skin. This could cause a secondary infection. If the mouth parts are broken off, they can be removed with a sterilized needle. Be sure to thoroughly wash your hands after touching or removing a tick.

The following are ways to protect against ticks:

- Avoid tick-infested areas like field borders, low vegetation, and shrubby, brushy areas;
- Since ticks have a tendency to crawl upward in search of an area to attach to, tuck pants legs into socks and shirttails into pants;
- Check yourself and your companions carefully for

ticks at least twice daily;
-Use liberal amounts of repellents, primarily with higher contents of DEET in them.

Not all species of ticks transmit Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever to humans. Only the American dog tick, which is usually picked up from lower strubby bushes, is known to transmit the disease in North Carolina. The tick is mahogany-colored with white mottling.

Food Poisoning

During this time of year, many people plan picnics, family reunions and other social events where food is served. If the food is not properly prepared and handled, however, it could result in food poisoning, according to local health officials.

Every year there are reports of food poisonings, particularly where large groups are involved. Food poisoning can also occur in your own home if you don't prepare, handle and store foods carefully. Failure to store and keep food at the proper temperature is usually the primary cause of

food poisoning. People offer prepare food such as chicken or ham and then leave it sitting on the counter at room temperature to cool for several hours before they serve it.

This is enough time for disease-causing bacteria to grow. The effects of food poisoning can vary greatly. Symptoms may range from very mild nausea, vomiting and diarrhea to more severe effects requiring hospital treatment.

Food should be stored and maintained at a temperature either below 45 degrees Fahrenheit or above 140 degrees Fahrenheit, depending on whether the food is to be served hot or cold. Most disease-causing bacteria do not grow at temperatures below or above these ranges.

Many people mistakenly believe that mayonnaise and salad dressings. If these foods are stored at improper temperatures, disease-causing bacteria can multiply resulting in possible food poisoning for those who eat it. Listed

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