



TOWN OF WELLESLEY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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SUMMER 2023 UPDATE

The Wellesley Health Department has prepared the following updated information for residents.

Heat and Sun Safety

Summer weather means more time outside in the sun and the potential for high temperatures. In addition to the information below, [visit our website for more sun and heat safety tips](#) to keep you and your family safe this summer.

Sun Safety Overview

- Limit your 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, sunglasses, and broad-brim hats. Sun-protective clothing is now available.
- Use broad spectrum sunscreens with an SPF value of 30 or higher regularly and as directed.

Summer Heat Safety Overview

- Never leave children or pets alone in a closed vehicle. Even with the windows cracked open, interior temperatures can rise almost 20°F within 10 minutes.
- Drink plenty of water — even if you are not thirsty. Avoid alcoholic beverages and liquids high in sugar.
- If you must be outdoors during extreme heat days, limit your outdoor activity to the morning and evening hours.
- If you do not have air conditioning, stay on your lowest floor, out of the sun. Use fans to stay cool and avoid using your stove and oven.
- [Know the symptoms of and watch out for heat-related illnesses.](#) Call 9-1-1 to report emergencies.

- Check on family, friends, and neighbors, especially the elderly, those who live alone, those with medical conditions, those who may need additional assistance, and those who may not have air conditioning.

Water Safety

Summertime means more time in and around the water, but it can also mean more water-related accidents. Avoid water danger by following these [tips and recommendations for water safety](#).

Water Safety Overview

- Learn to swim and swim with a buddy and never alone, even if you're a strong swimmer.
- [Learn CPR](#)
- know the [signs of drowning](#)- Drowning looks much different than most people think!
- Keep a cellphone nearby and know where you are in case you need to call for help.
- Always supervise children in and around water, even if they know how to swim. Stay within arm's length when supervising children who aren't strong swimmers.
- Swim in locations with lifeguards when possible. Even if a lifeguard is present, make sure to closely supervise children.
- Air-filled or foam toys, such as "water wings," "noodles," or inner tubes are not substitutions for a life jacket. These toys are not designed to keep swimmers safe or prevent drowning.
- Always wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket when in a boat.
- Only swim in areas specifically designated for swimming.
- Learn how to identify hazards, like rip tides, when swimming in oceans, lakes, rivers, and ponds. Avoid swimming in an area with strong moving currents, underwater debris, and water temperatures that could be dangerous.
- Do not dive or jump into water that is not at least 12 feet deep. Enter the water feet-first and never dive head-first into a river, lake, or pond. You can severely injure your head and neck leading to life-altering injuries and/or drowning.
- Do not swim during a thunderstorm or when there is lightning.

Ticks and Mosquitoes: Preventing Insect-Borne Diseases

Ticks

Ticks are found in wooded areas, high grass, or leaf litter. They are most active during the spring, summer and fall. Due to the mild winter, tick activity has already begun, and residents should take precautions when outdoors.

Protect yourself from ticks.

- Wear a hat and light-colored clothing (so ticks can be easily spotted), including long-sleeved shirts and long pants tucked into boots or socks.

- Use insect repellents. Use repellents containing at least 20% DEET on exposed skin and clothing. Reapply repellents as needed. (Always follow products labels).
- Permethrin is an effective repellent that can be used on clothing, but not on skin. One application to pants, socks, and shoes may be effective through several washings.
- [Do a daily tick check. Check hair, underarms, behind the ears and groin. Don't forget to check pets that have been outdoors!](#)
- Wash and dry clothes using the “hot” settings to kill any ticks present.

Tick FAQ

[What kinds of ticks carry Lyme](#) and [other diseases?](#) [What do they look like?](#)

[What should you do if you find a tick on your body?](#) [How do you properly remove a tick?](#)

[What should you do if you suspect you were bitten by a tick or you suspect you Lyme disease?](#)

Mosquitoes

In addition to being a nuisance, mosquitoes can transmit diseases like West Nile Virus and EEE (Eastern Equine Encephalitis). Mosquitoes breed in standing water and can be found in almost all outside areas. They are most active during dawn and dusk in the warmer months.

Protect yourself from mosquitoes-avoid bites by:

- Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents with one of the active ingredients below. When used as directed, EPA-registered insect repellents are proven effective.

DEET

Picaridin

Oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE)

Para-menthane-diol (PMD)

2-undecanone

- Use screens on windows and doors. Repair holes in screens to keep mosquitoes outdoors.
- Stop mosquitoes from laying eggs by removing standing water. Once a week, empty and turn over, cover, or throw out items that hold water, such as tires, buckets, planters, toys, pools, birdbaths, flowerpots, or trash containers. Also, clear clogged rain gutters regularly. Check for water-holding containers both indoors and outdoors.
- Wellesley belongs to the East Middlesex Mosquito Control Commission (EMMCC) however the town does not subscribe to or support spraying to control the adult mosquito population. Instead, the focus is directed towards targeted larval control of breeding areas such as street catch basins. Read more about the EMMCC [HERE](#).

[Visit the Wellesley Health Department website for more information.](#)

Preventing Summer Illness

COVID-19

COVID-19 remains active, and residents should still take precautions when necessary. Everyone should receive at least ONE updated (bivalent) vaccine to be considered up to date on vaccination, even if you received an older (monovalent) booster. People who are over 65 or 6 years and older and immunocompromised may opt to receive a second bivalent booster. Visit the [CDC website](#) for complete COVID vaccination information.

Measles

If you are traveling internationally this summer, make sure you are up to date on your vaccines, especially your MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) vaccine.

Mpox

[Those who meet the criteria](#) should get a second (or first) dose of vaccine.

Foodborne Illness

Cooking and eating outdoors in warm weather can be challenging when it comes to food safety. Bacteria in food multiply faster at temperatures between 40°F and 140°F, so the spring and summer heat can pose a problem. [Here are some easy things you can do to help keep everyone at your table safe from foodborne illness.](#)

Thinking Ahead to Fall

- The RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) vaccine is now approved by the FDA. Those over age 60 should talk to a physician about whether to get vaccinated before the Fall season begins.
- The FDA has advised manufacturers to update the COVID vaccine for the Fall. This vaccine will be a monovalent vaccine targeting a currently circulating subvariant of Omicron.
- Teens and young adults should consider getting vaccinated for Meningitis, especially those heading to college. [Visit our website to learn more.](#)