

Different ways to beat the heat

Recent high temperatures across York Region have prompted the York Region Public Health Department to issue a warning to residents to take additional precautions during spells of hot weather.

Heat stroke is a severe condition which occurs when a person's natural body cooling process fails and core body temper-

ature rises above 40.6 C. Heat stroke is a medical emergency that can develop in a few minutes or hours. Symptoms can include mental confusion, extreme fatigue and slowness and sometimes profuse perspiring. Quickly lowering the body temperature is the recommended treatment.

The elderly, infants and chil-

dren under four years of age, persons with high blood pressure, heart disease, chronic medical conditions and individuals taking certain medications, are most at risk for heat-related illnesses.

The York Region Public Health Department suggests the following preventive measures:

1) Reduce physical activity

especially in full sun. Obesity is an added risk for exercise-induced heat stroke.

2) Drink extra liquids.

3) Increase time spent in air-conditioned places.

4) Maintain adequate salt intake, however added salt tablets are not recommended for general use.

5) Take frequent cool showers or baths.

Finally, be aware of sun exposure. Protecting children from the sun may reduce their lifetime risk of developing skin cancer. Here are some Sun Sense tips:

1) Keep sun exposure to a minimum, especially between the peak hours of 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., when the sun's rays are most intense.

2) Use a sunscreen liberally, apply 15-30 minutes before exposure and reapply every two hours when playing outdoors. Sunscreen should not be used on babies under 6 months - they are likely to absorb more of the product through the skin.

3) Up to 80 per cent of the sun's harmful rays can penetrate haze, light clouds and fog, so do not have a false sense of security on cloudy days.

4) Ensure appropriate clothing is worn during prolonged periods of the sun, including a hat, long-sleeved, close woven shirt and pants and UV coated sunglasses.

5) Beware of reflective surfaces. Sand, snow, concrete and water can reflect up to 85 per cent of the sun's damaging rays.

6) Examine your skin regularly for any changes in moles, freckles or skin discolorations.

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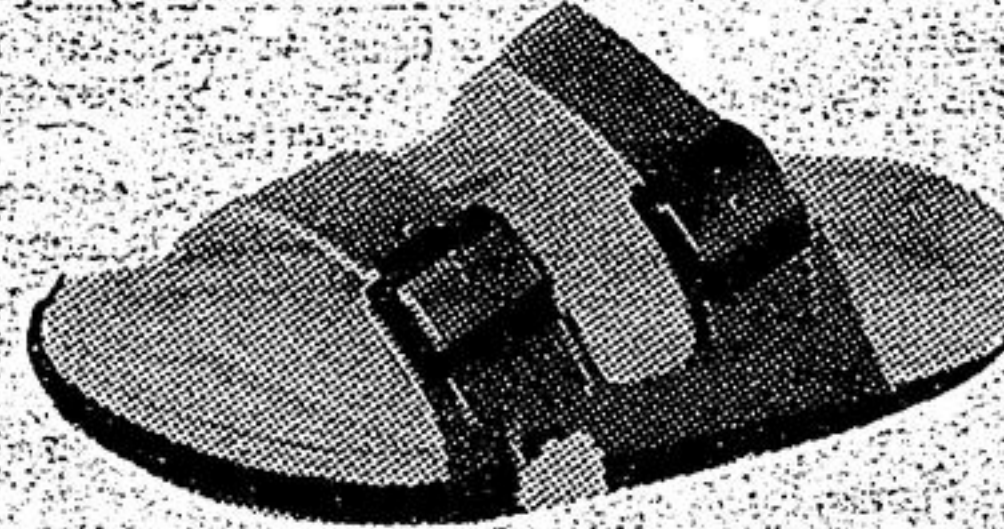


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