

HEALTH & FITNESS

Your eyes need as much protection from UV rays as your skin

If you're on the ski slopes, protect your eyes as carefully as you protect your skin.

The sun's ultraviolet rays induce skin cancer as well as increase the rate of its growth. Registered nurses recommend lotions with a sun screen to help protect your skin from UV rays. But, your eyes need protection too.

Many skiers experience symptoms, from sore eyes to snow blindness, after exposure to the sun and snow. Tinted sunglasses alone, do not provide the necessary protection, although they reduce the dazzling effects of the sunlight. Ultraviolet protection must be built into the sunglasses to prevent burning of the cornea that causes snow blindness.

The UV rays are also a contributing factor in the formation of certain types of cataracts. One report estimates that 20 to 25 per cent of cataracts are the result of the total amount of UV exposure over a lifetime. When a cataract forms, the lens of the eye becomes cloudy and blocks the passage of light needed for vision. The process occurs as the clear soluble proteins in the lens change to become insoluble and opaque.

Skiers are at the greatest risk of UV exposure and have the most to gain from protection. At 6,000 feet of elevation, UV exposure is one-third more than at sea level. And, because skiers

receive the sun's rays directly as well as from the snow's reflection, 95 per cent of the available UV radiation reaches their eyes. Even on a day with fog, haze or light cloud, up to 80 per cent of these rays can penetrate through to the skier.

Hazy days present an additional hazard because the eye relaxes. As the pupil dilates and squinting is reduced, there is less natural protection from exposure to UV rays.

When buying sunglasses, you should check the amount of UV protection the lenses provide. Lenses that absorb 98 per cent or more of the UV rays are available. UV protection will either be built into the lenses or applied as external coatings. Protection is greater when it is built in.

Several factors influence the effectiveness of sunglasses, including the quality of the lenses and frame, the style and the amount of UV protection. After checking for UV protection, check the quality of the lenses. This is determined by the amount of light that is absorbed and whether or not your vision is sharp when you look through them. For effective glare protection, the lenses should absorb at least 65 per cent of intense sunlight. Some go as high as 95 per cent.

The cost does not necessarily reflect the amount of UV protection or the quality of the lenses.

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FOCUS ON FAITH

Tips for a safe holiday season

Christmas is a wonderful time of year filled with delectable treats and bright, shiny decorations.

Unfortunately, these can lead to some very serious consequences especially for family pets.

Here are some safety tips for the pet owners from the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Dogs and cats are particularly vulnerable to dangers during the holiday season.

Treats, especially chocolate, can prove to be toxic to pets.

Reactions range from vomiting and diarrhea to tremors and seizures.

It would be best to limit treats to dog biscuits and kitty treats.

Beware of chicken and turkey bones. Splintered bones can easily become lodged in the throat and cause choking.

Christmas Plants
Poinsettia, mistletoe and holly can be extremely toxic if consumed.

Remember to keep these plants out of the reach of pets.

Christmas decorations
Shimmering tinsel and string can become a cat's nightmare if swallowed.

Ingesting these items can lead to lethal intestinal blockages. The warning signs include lack of appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, lethargy and abdominal pain.

If you suspect your pet is suf-

fering from any of these warning signs, please see your veterinary immediately.

Once Christmas Day is passed the danger continues as long as the tree is up, and residents should be especially aware of not letting the tree dry out as it can become a fire hazard.

Christmas pets
Making the decision to adopt a companion pet is a tremendous responsibility and one that the whole family should take part in.

If you have given or received a pet for a present, please take

responsibility for pet to be sure that a responsible choice has been made.

Unfortunately, many Christmas pets are abandoned each year because those cute, cuddly puppies and kittens can, which looked so wonderful under the Christmas tree, can grow into large and demanding animals.

One final note, on behalf of all the animals in our shelters across Ontario, the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals would like to extend to everyone a safe and happy holiday season to everyone.

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
Please join us Sunday at 11 a.m. for a service of Nine Lessons & Carols.
Infant & toddler care provided.
Church School resumes January 3.
143 Main St. Markham
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14 Highgate Drive, Markham
(Two blocks north of Steeles or two blocks south of Denison on Birchmount Rd.)
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New Year's Eve
Thursday, December 31 - 5:00 p.m.
Vigil of Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

New Year's Day
Friday, January 1, 1999
9:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 12: Noon and 3:30 p.m.

A Happy and Holy New Year to all from St. Thomas the Apostle Parish

CENTRAL UNITED CHURCH
131 Main St., Unionville 474-0183
Worship Service - 11:00 a.m.
A warm welcome awaits you

MARKHAM MISSIONARY CHURCH
Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada
Sunday, December 27th - 10:30 a.m.
Family Worship Service - Pastor Loughheed

May God Bless You and Your Family as We Enter the Year 1999

Call church for additional program information
5438 Major MacKenzie Dr. East
Markham, Ontario, L3P 3J3
(905) 294-5081 (905) 294-5383 (fax)

BETHESDA LUTHERAN CHURCH
20 Union St., Unionville • 477-1731
(Near Hwy. 7 & Main)
Worship - 10:30 a.m.

THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH FROM A-Z

TEACHING

Teaching is one of the best ways of learning. Spiritual responsibility for one's life rests squarely on our own shoulders. Sharing what we know with others enkindles our soul, much like the Nightingale that becomes enchanted by its own melody.

For further information about the Bahá'í Faith Please Call: Frosia at 905-771-8171 or 1-800-433-3284