

Mountain Peaks Family Practice Promotes Safe Sunlight Exposure for Optimal Health This Summer

OREM, UT, USA, June 20, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ --

As summer begins, Mountain Peaks Family Practice is dedicated to educating the community on the benefits of sunlight and providing guidelines for safe sun exposure. With numerous health advantages, from boosting mood and enhancing sleep to promoting bone health and strengthening the immune system, sunlight is essential for overall well-being. Dr. Robert Durrans, lead physician at Mountain Peaks Family Practice, and the team at Mountain Peaks Family Practice offer valuable insights on how to enjoy the sun responsibly this season.



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Enjoying the sun's benefits doesn't mean compromising on safety. By following these guidelines, you can maximize the positive effects of sunlight while minimizing the risks.”

*Dr. Robert Durrans, owner
and practitioner*

The Benefits of Sunlight

Sunlight exposure has been shown to have significant positive effects on mental and physical health. "Exposure to natural light increases the brain's release of serotonin, a hormone associated with boosting mood and helping a person feel calm and focused," explains Dr. Durrans. Inadequate sunlight exposure can lead to depression and Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), making it crucial to spend time outdoors.

Sunlight also plays a critical role in regulating circadian rhythms, which dictate sleep-wake cycles. "By aligning our circadian rhythms with the natural light-dark cycle, we can improve sleep quality, leading to better overall health and functioning," says Dr. Durrans. Additionally, sunlight is essential for the synthesis of vitamin D, which is vital for calcium absorption and bone health.

Vitamin D, synthesized through sunlight exposure, is also significant for immune system functioning. It helps activate T cells, which are crucial for immune response and fighting off infections. Adequate levels of vitamin D can enhance the body's ability to ward off illnesses, contributing to overall health and resilience.

Emerging evidence suggests that sunlight exposure may influence weight management by regulating metabolic processes and appetite through its effects on hormones and mood. Furthermore, controlled sunlight exposure can benefit certain skin conditions, such as psoriasis, eczema, jaundice, and acne.

For children and adolescents, spending time outdoors in natural light can reduce the risk of developing nearsightedness (myopia). Outdoor activities expose the eyes to different light conditions, which can help maintain eye health and proper vision development.

Guidelines for Safe Summer Sun Exposure

While sunlight offers numerous benefits, overexposure can lead to skin damage, sunburn, and an increased risk of skin cancer. Here are some practical guidelines from Dr. Durrans and the team at Mountain Peaks Family Practice to enjoy the sun safely this summer:

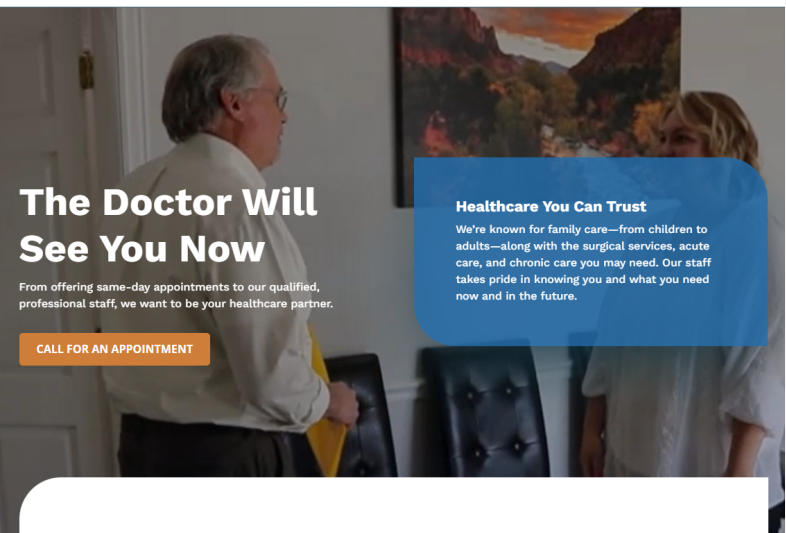
1. **Skin Type Awareness:** Different skin types react differently to sun exposure. Individuals with fair skin are more prone to sunburn and should take extra precautions, while those with darker skin have more natural protection but are still at risk of skin damage.

2. **Sunscreen Application:** Applying broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30 is essential for protecting the skin from harmful UV rays. Sunscreen should be applied generously to all exposed skin and reapplied every two hours or after swimming or sweating.



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3. Protective Clothing: Wearing lightweight, long-sleeved shirts, pants, and wide-brimmed hats can provide an additional layer of protection. Clothing with a UPF (Ultraviolet Protection Factor) rating offers added assurance. Sunglasses that block 100% of UV rays are also important for protecting the eyes.

4. Shade During Peak Hours: The sun's rays are strongest between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Planning outdoor activities for the early morning or late afternoon can minimize exposure during peak intensity hours. Seeking shade under trees, umbrellas, or shelters also reduces direct sun exposure.

5. Hydration: Spending time in the sun can lead to dehydration, especially during hot summer days. Drinking plenty of water throughout the day helps stay hydrated and aids the body in regulating its temperature.

6. UV Index Monitoring: The UV Index provides a daily forecast of the expected risk of overexposure to UV radiation from the sun. Higher values indicate a greater risk. Checking the UV Index can help plan outdoor activities and take appropriate precautions.

7. Medication Awareness: Some medications can increase the skin's sensitivity to sunlight, making sunburn and other reactions more likely. Consulting with a healthcare provider or pharmacist about potential sun-related side effects can help take extra precautions if needed.

8. Gradual Exposure: For those who haven't been in the sun for a while, starting with short periods of exposure and gradually increasing the time spent outside allows the skin to adjust and can reduce the risk of sunburn.

9. Protection for Infants and Young Children: Children's skin is more sensitive to UV radiation. Infants under six months old should be kept out of direct sunlight, and protective clothing and hats are recommended for older children. Sunscreen should be applied to children over six months old, and playing in the shade is encouraged.

10. Prompt Treatment of Sunburns: Despite best efforts, sunburns can happen. If sunburn occurs, taking steps to treat it promptly is important. Cool baths, aloe vera gel, and over-the-counter pain relievers can help alleviate symptoms. Keeping the affected area moisturized and avoiding further sun exposure until the burn heals is also beneficial.

"Enjoying the sun's benefits doesn't mean compromising on safety. By following these guidelines, you can maximize the positive effects of sunlight while minimizing the risks," advises Dr. Durrans.

Durrans continued, "As we soak up the summer sun, let's embrace its warmth and vitality with respect and care. Our minds, bodies, and hearts will thank us for the thoughtful approach, leading to a healthier and happier season under the sun. From all of us at Mountain Peaks

Family Practice, we wish you a safe and enjoyable summer!"

About Mountain Peaks Family Practice

Located in the heart of Utah Valley, Mountain Peaks Family Practice has established itself as a cornerstone of community health by providing exceptional healthcare services for several years. From its modest beginnings, the practice has grown into a premier family healthcare provider, offering a comprehensive array of services tailored to meet the needs of individuals and families across all life stages.

The Mountain Peaks Family Practice team understands that excellent healthcare is built on a foundation of expertly trained and compassionate medical professionals, with a team comprised of dedicated medical professionals and support staff who are committed to delivering personalized care with professionalism and warmth. The team endeavors to create an environment where patients feel valued and understood.

Mountain Peaks Family Practice services are designed to address a broad spectrum of medical needs, ensuring accessible and continuous care for the community. Whether it's preventive care, acute treatment, or chronic disease management, the team aims to offer solutions that promote long-term health and well-being.

Discover more about how our team is ready to serve you and your family by visiting our website at <http://mountainpeaksfamilypractice.com>.

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