

Buzz Body & Bites for Teens

Authored by the 2023-2024 Virginia Healthy Living Ambassadors, Tonya Price, Extension 4-H Specialist, Virginia Cooperative Extension, and Rebecca Owen, Family and Consumer Science SNAP-Ed Extension Agent, Virginia Cooperative Extension

Buzz: Sustainable Sun Safety

For years the chemicals inside of sunscreen have effectively protected humans from harmful radiation. However, in more recent years our oceans have been acidifying at higher rates due to increased pollution. This crisis has encouraged scientists and marine researchers to investigate the effect sunscreen has on marine ecosystems. In particular, research has found that traditional sunscreens are destructive to marine organisms such as algae and in particular have undermined the symbiotic relationship between coral and algae creating coral bleaching. Coral bleaching occurs when the ocean water becomes too warm due to acidification stressing out the algae and causing them to expel (break away) from the coral; leaving the coral exposed and dead. This massive decay of coral and other marine organisms reduces the biodiversity of oceans which shortcuts the ability for a proper food chain to occur causing other species in turn to start dying off. The enigma of coral bleaching that is so prominent in our coral systems has encouraged people to discover the true efficacy of sunscreen and question if “reef safe” is truly better for our reefs. The question is can a sunscreen really exist that can dually protect the vibrancy of reefs while providing ample sun protection for humans to prevent skin cancer? The answer is YES! The typical chemicals in traditional sunscreens that have been destructive to the oceans are oxybenzone, octinoxate, and avobenzone. One of which oxybenzone has already been outlawed in the production of sunscreen! Chemical agent, zinc oxide has been discovered and utilized as the base of new “reef-safe” sunscreens. Testing was done with a common marine algae *Nannochloopsis Oculata* comparing the amount of cell growth and decay using a zinc oxide mineral-based sunscreen versus ones with the traditional makeup. The zinc oxide mineral based sunscreen was found to deplete almost half as many nanometers of cells in the algae in comparison to the other sunscreens. This several-month series of testing echoes the many more reports that show zinc oxide to be a far more sustainable sunscreen agent for marine ecosystems while still providing ample sun coverage for beach-goers. So how does this problem impact you? If you look at the back of a sunscreen bottle 9 times out of 10 the active ingredients include names of lengthy chemicals such as octinoxate, avobenzone and homosalate. These active ingredients though effective in sunscreen are endocrine disruptors meaning these are the chief chemicals creating marine damage. After extensive research and testing out of those active ingredients, zinc oxide-based sunscreens are proven to be more sustainable for use. Now it's time for you to keep yourself protected this summer while actively being a friend to our marine ecosystems! Swap out your chemical sunscreens for mineral-based sunscreens with zinc oxide.

Body: Pool Safety Tips

- Swim with a buddy: Never swim alone, and always have a friend or family member nearby in case of an emergency.
- Learn to swim: Knowing basic swimming skills is crucial for pool safety. If you haven't already taken swim lessons, you are encouraged to sign up.
- Adult supervision: Ensure that there is always an adult present when swimming, especially if there are inexperienced swimmers in the group.
- Know the depth: Be aware of the depth of the pool, particularly if there are diving boards or slides. Diving into shallow water can result in serious injuries.
- Avoid running or roughhousing: Running or engaging in rough play around the pool area can lead to accidents and injuries.
- Sun protection: Apply sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher, wear sunglasses, and take breaks from the sun to prevent sunburn and long-term skin damage.
- Stay hydrated: Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated while swimming. Avoid consuming sugary drinks, as they can contribute to dehydration.

- Understand pool rules and signs: Familiarize yourself with the pool's rules and warning signs, such as no diving or no running.
 - Learn basic CPR: Knowing how to perform CPR can save a life in case of an emergency. You are encouraged to take a CPR course.
 - Keep pool area clean: A cluttered pool area can create tripping hazards and make it difficult to quickly respond to emergencies. Ensure that towels, toys, and other items are stored safely away from the pool's edge.

Bites: Build Your Own Popsicles

Ingredients:

- Liquid: choose from 2 cups low-fat milk, 2 cups unsweetened fortified soy milk, 2 cups low-fat vanilla yogurt, or 2 cups 100% juice
- Fruit: choose from 1 cup frozen fruit, 2 sliced bananas, 1 cup fruit canned in juice, or ½ cup frozen 100% juice concentrate
- Extra: choose from ¼ cup peanut butter, ½ teaspoon cinnamon, or 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Directions:

- Select a liquid, fruit, and/or extra
- Layer fruits and/or extras in blender. Pour liquid over top. Blend until smooth.
- Pour into popsicle molds or small plastic cups. Insert popsicle mold handles or use plastic spoons or popsicle sticks in cups.
- For chunky popsicles, add fruit to molds. Mix any extras with the liquid and pour over fruit.
- Freeze 4-6 hours or overnight. Run warm water over molds to loosen and remove the popsicles.
- Makes 6 3-ounce servings.
- As you become more familiar with the recipe, try adding or replacing with different liquids, fruits, and extras for a different flavor.

Find more recipes at eatsmartmovemoreva.org.

Resources

Virginia 4-H

www.facebook.com/Virginia4HStateOffice

Virginia Family Nutrition Program

eatsmartmovemoreva.org

www.facebook.com/VaFNP

Virginia Cooperative Extension

ext.vt.edu

facebook.com/VirginiaCooperativeExtension

Editors: Tonya Price, PhD; Rebecca Owen, MEd; Helen Leslie

2023-24 Healthy Living Ambassadors: Alice Milton, Ivory Western, Lidija Westfall, Deborah Olorunda, Cadence Baker, Olivia-Kate Crombie, Cash Chambers, Jaleah Pulliam, Meghan McGee, Avyonna Hester

Visit Virginia Cooperative Extension: ext.vt.edu

Virginia Cooperative Extension is a partnership of Virginia Tech, Virginia State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments. Its programs and employment are open to all, regardless of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, military status, or any other basis protected by law.