

# Safety Suggestions

(NAPSA)—Keep you and your family safe and healthy this summer by avoiding some common trouble areas with the help of CVS pharmacist Juan Oquendo. Here, he offers answers to frequent health questions:

## **Q. How can I protect myself from sunburn?**

**A.** Use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher. The higher the SPF, the greater the protection from sunburn, caused mostly by UVB rays.

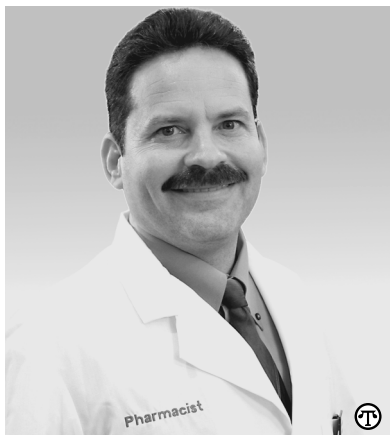
Sunscreens called “broad spectrum” block out both UVA and UVB rays and do a better job of protecting skin from other effects of the sun. Reapply sunscreen every two hours, even on cloudy days. Anyone using a prescription or over-the-counter drug that is applied to the skin should check with the pharmacist about sunburn risk. Examples include erythromycin and Retin-A for acne and capsaicin topical to relieve pain associated with arthritis.

## **Q. How do I treat poison ivy?**

**A.** Reactions to poison ivy, poison oak or poison sumac are often marked by redness, itchiness and swelling that appears four hours to four days after contact. The symptoms usually resolve in one to three weeks without treatment. You can ease the symptoms with a cool compress and calamine lotion. Other therapies may include antihistamines by mouth or steroid creams. Ivy Block, available at drugstores, can help keep the plant’s oil from penetrating the skin.

## **Q. How do I stay safe from bugs?**

**A.** Many insects, such as mosquitoes and ticks, are attracted to our body heat as well as carbon dioxide we exhale. Even though they cannot be avoided entirely, there are ways to protect yourself from bites or stings. Avoid per-



**Pharmacist Juan Oquendo says anyone using a prescription or over-the-counter drug applied to the skin should ask about a higher sunburn risk.**

fumes, and wear long-sleeved shirts or long pants when in grassy areas to better see ticks. Sprays that contain permethrin are excellent guards against mosquitoes. If you or your child has ever had a serious reaction to a bee sting, you should carry an EpiPen, an injectable epinephrine kit available by prescription, with you at all times.

## **Q. What should I keep in my medicine cabinet?**

**A.** An inexpensive first aid kit such as the one available at CVS/pharmacy is a good place to start or you can create your own. Some essential items include antiseptic wipes to clean wounds; antibiotic ointment such as bacitracin to prevent infection; pain relievers such as acetaminophen, aspirin tablets and ibuprofen; adhesive bandages and tweezers. Your pharmacist can help you pick the right products for your family.

## **Q. Where can I get more information?**

**A.** Your pharmacy can be a great resource. Go to [www.cvs.com](http://www.cvs.com) to find the nearest one or call 1-800-746-7287.