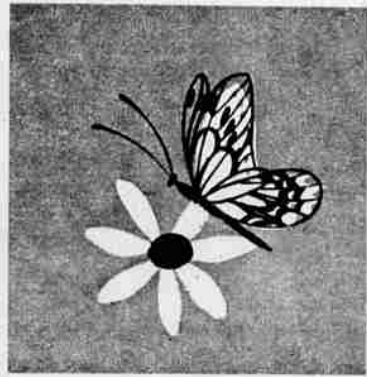




"GIVE ME SUMMER any time" is a popular expression usually confined to the raw, blustery days of Winter. Folks are quick to forget that the poetic midyear months have their discomforts and illnesses, too.

Many of the pitfalls of Summer, however, result from neither heat nor humidity, but from our own carelessness. A little more attention to ourselves and our surroundings might make Summer almost as pleasant as a Winter dream.

Understanding your body's cooling system will help you weather the coming dog days. The body's main thermostat, for ex-

ample, goes under the name hypothalamus; it's in the brain, near the spinal column.

When Summer sets in, the hypothalamus "tells" the blood vessels to enlarge, allowing more inside heat to rise to the skin surface. The skin then becomes a radiator, transferring the extra heat from the body to the surrounding air.

If the surrounding air is warmer than the skin, however, this radiation becomes inefficient and a secondary cooling system is called into action. Sweat glands coiled around the blood vessels draw fluid from the blood and bring it to the skin surface.

We call this moisture either perspiration or sweat, depending on how genteel we are. The evaporation of sweat from our body carries off more heat, provided the air around us doesn't itself have too much moisture, or humidity. These are the primary ways our body keeps us cool. How can we help it along?

We can counter humidity by wearing porous, absorbent clothing and keeping the air circulating around us. Our body creates an envelope of moisture which we should supplant by having less humid air move over our body. The porous clothing lets this dry air reach our skin, evaporate the perspiration, and then escape.

Absorbent fabric is important because it will distribute sweat and its cooling effects over the body; moisture that simply drips away is wasted cooling fluid.

Perspiration, of course, depends on the body having moisture in the first place, so drink plenty of liquids in the Summer. A cool beverage, incidentally, is just as helpful as a tepid one—just drink it more slowly. Don't wait until you're thirsty, either, since thirst ordinarily will lag behind your needs.

Perspiration drains salt from the body, so it's wise to step up your salt intake. The increase needn't be much for people who don't exert themselves in work or play—just a little extra with their regular meals. Folks who "work up a real sweat" might consider salt pills. Of course, the salt-free dieter should stick to doctor's orders.

SINCE surroundings trigger the body's cooling mechanism, let's see what can be done to keep you in a cool spot. For example, even the air-conditioned home, our modern-day oasis (see story on page 7), can be made a more effective shelter against heat through use of ideas developed by tropical people.

They know that the home's hot spot is the roof and consequently paint it white to reflect the sun's heat rather than let it pass into the house. And they make sure there is plenty of ventilation between the roof and the ceiling of the living rooms. Windows at each end of the attic or crawl space should be open to prevent an oven forming over your head. An attic fan assures circulation of fresh, cool air above you.

The sun waxes hot in the afternoon, striking the west wall of a house full force; so, whenever possible, trees, bushes, and vines

should stand between the wall and the setting sun to block this heat.

Windows, so plentiful in modern housing, permit the sun's rays almost limitless access to your home. East and west windows are particularly vulnerable, but shutters or bamboo shades hung *outside* the glass will cut off the sun; inside shades are far less effective.

All this is helpful up to a point—the point where your family abandons home and regular living habits for the hectic merry-go-round called "vacation." That's where discomfort may turn into disaster.

Sunburn seems as much a part of vacationing as forgetting to cancel the milk deliveries. The first day's sunning should be confined to 15 minutes, and fair-skinned persons and children under two should cut that time to five minutes. Increase the time gradually each day. Remember three points—noonday sun is especially intense; wind causes burns, too; and a cloudy day is no guarantee against burning.

Heat also takes a Summer toll. Overdoing play or work may cause heat cramps so severe that the victim's arms and legs become almost rigid. Mild cramps may be relieved by salt tablets and rest, but a physician should be consulted.

Even more dangerous is sun stroke. Older people and alcoholics are particularly prone to this illness, which strikes after long exposure to sun, heat, and humidity. Perspiration stops, locking heat within the body and causing body temperature to climb above 106 degrees. The victim turns pink or gray and loses consciousness. Without prompt medical attention, an attack will prove fatal; until a doctor arrives, the patient should be bathed in cold water or packed in ice.

DIABETICS and heart patients, in particular, should take it easier during warm weather—although that doesn't mean an end of Summer fun for them. Each patient, of course, is an individual case and can be guided only by his physician, but generally the heart victim will avoid exposure and exertion in hot weather. Heat decreases the efficiency of the body and makes the heart work harder, particularly in the first hot days when the system still is adjusting to temperature changes of the season.

The diabetic may have to take extra quantities of salt and water, since his body will dehydrate not only from perspiration but from the diabetic condition.

Children run the greatest risks in Summer. Infants are particularly susceptible to heat exhaustion. A wetted cap or handkerchief over the head will make them less fretful during hot weather.

As children grow older, they thrive on Summer—ask any father who tries to keep up with them during the family vacation. But all the activities of the season breed its most common "disease," the accident.

Children should be alerted to the extra dangers of vacation time—the construction site with its excavation and machinery, the brush and its poisonous roots and vines, unattended quarries and swimming pools, and most of all, highways and streets. Some 500 cyclists, for instance, will be killed this Summer, mainly because they will dart from between parked cars or from driveways into traffic lanes, swerve without warning into autos, or race other cyclists on busy streets.

While you're making the kids accident-cautious, review your own Summer safety habits. Remember that while the fatality rate from natural causes drops in Summer, accidental deaths increase by more than 3,000. Drownings and auto mishaps lead the way.

Summer could be our safest season, if we helped nature along. Sometimes, of course, we're going to be uncomfortable, and maybe we'll even yield to the temptation of overdoing a two-week vacation.

But when it comes to driving, swimming, and boating, let's not take any chances at all. By exercising more caution in these areas, we'll be making our biggest contribution toward keeping Summer the healthy, happy time it should be.

People who want to weather Summer rigors
should take tips from folks in Southern climes.