

Stay safe in really hot weather

- During extreme heat, it is easy to become dehydrated or for your body to overheat.
- Heat can make you really sick or even cause death.
- It can lead to problems like heat exhaustion or heatstroke, make heart attacks or strokes happen suddenly, and make existing health issues like kidney or lung problems worse.
- Here are few steps to stay well in really hot weather:
 - **Keep cool:** use air conditioning or a fan, wear light and loose-fitting clothing, and keep skin wet
 - **Stay hydrated:** drink water before you feel thirsty.
 - **Plan your activities:** watch the forecast and plan activities at cooler times of the day.
 - **Check-in with family, friends and neighbours.**
 - **Monitor the weather forecast** and the Bureau of Meteorology Heatwave warnings [online](#) or via the [Bureau's app](#).



- To learn more visit:
<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/how-to-cope-and-stay-safe-in-extreme-heat>

Stay away from mosquito bites



- Warm and wet weather can mean more mosquito biting and breeding, including the ones that can carry diseases that make you sick.
- Your only protection against mosquitoes and the diseases they can carry **is to avoid mozzie bites.**
 - Mozzies can bite through tight clothing. Cover up - wear long, loose-fitting clothing.
 - Use mosquito repellents containing Picaridin or DEET on all exposed skin.
 - Limit outdoor activity if lots of mosquitoes are about.
 - Remove stagnant water where mosquitoes can breed around your home or campsite.
 - On holidays make sure your accommodation is fitted with mosquito netting or screens.
 - Use 'knockdown' fly spray, mosquito coils or plug-in repellent where you gather to sit or eat outdoors.
 - Don't forget the kids – always check the insect repellent label. On babies, you might need to apply repellent to clothes instead of skin.

- For more information visit:
<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/protect-yourself-mosquito-borne-disease>



Safe and Savour! - Food Safety with outdoor cooking

- Enjoying the summer sun with outdoor meals is delightful!
- **Summer is also the time for food poisoning due to unsafe handling, faster bacteria growth in the heat, and challenges in outdoor food prep without proper facilities.**



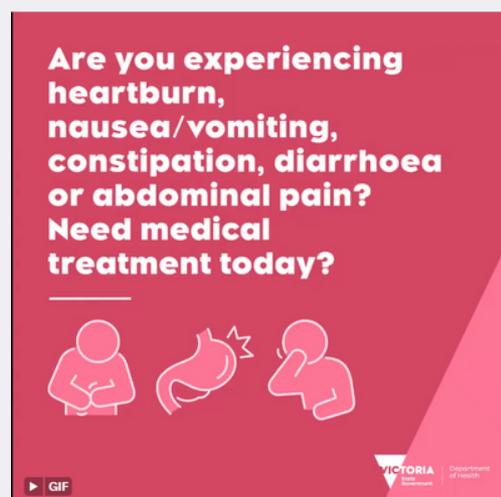
A few tips for keeping food safe to eat when you have a barbeque at home are:

- Keep meat refrigerated until ready to cook.
- Separate raw meats from cooked items and store them below other food to prevent contamination.
- Cook food to a **safe temperature**; use a thermometer for accuracy or ensure poultry is cooked with no pink flesh.
- Use a fresh plate for cooked meats; avoid reusing plates or utensils that touch raw meat.
- Only bring salads, dips, and perishables (easily spoilt) outside when you need them, and put them back in the fridge when you're done.
- If food sits in the danger zone (between 5 and 60 degrees C) for over 4 hours, throw it away. Don't keep it in the fridge or save it for later.
- Cover food to keep it safe from birds, insects, and animals.

- More information at www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/food-safety-outdoors#eating-outdoors-and-the-risk-of-food-poisoning
- For tips on storing vegetables correctly visit [Nutrition Australia website](https://www.tryfor5.org.au/store) at <https://www.tryfor5.org.au/store>

Need medical treatment today?

- If you need treatment or care today but it's **not life-threatening**, and you can't get a GP appointment, help is available.
- **There are a range of healthcare services where and when you need them, that are:**
 - free or low-cost, walk-in without an appointment, or online,
 - open 7 days for extended hours,
 - open to everyone, with no GP referral or Medicare card needed
 - staffed with doctors and nurses, and often connected to hospitals.
- If you need medical care today that is not life-threatening and you can't get a GP appointment, use this www.healthdirect.gov.au/australian-health-services to find healthcare services in your area, open 7 days a week, walk-in or online, which are easy to access and don't need a referral or an appointment.



WPHU investigation finds e-cigarettes widely available and accessible to young people



- E-cigarettes (commonly known as vapes) are a significant and emerging public health challenge.
- **There is growing evidence that e-cigarette use can lead to nicotine addiction and a transition to cigarettes**, with the normalisation of vaping in children and young people occurring in Australia and Victoria.
- The Western Public Health Unit's (WPHU) **'Out and About'** Project aimed to develop an understanding of the accessibility of non-prescription e-cigarettes within the WPHU catchment.
- **The investigation found that 70 per cent of schools in one local government area were located less than 1km from the nearest retailer selling vapes.**
- To read more about this initiative and the findings visit <https://www.wphu.org.au/western-public-health-unit-investigation-finds-e-cigarettes-widely-available-and-easy-to-access-for-children-and-young-people/>
- **Parents, carers and young people can access the facts on vaping by visiting Quit's 'Get the facts on vaping' online hub at www.vapingfacts.org.au.**

Ready for Term 1, 2024 - Quit Vaping education curriculum resources

- Quit Victoria, in partnership with other organisations, have developed a suite of evidence-based, curriculum-aligned vaping education resources for Victorian schools.
- **These FREE teaching and learning resources for Years 7 to 10 will support schools to help young people learn about vaping harms and ultimately create healthier communities.**
- **Resources downloadable for use early in 2024 from Quit Victoria's vaping information hub vapingfacts.org.au**
- Please register [here](#) to receive timely access to these resources once finalised and invitations to webinars or other events that focus on addressing e-cigarette use in school communities.
- More information at quit.org.au/news



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Sexual Health - Participate in the PACT or Step Up study!

- The **Partner Cohort Treatment Study (PACT Study)** is an Australian research project investigating a new treatment for Bacterial Vaginosis (BV) which involves treating both the person with BV and their partner with antibiotics simultaneously. **It is focused on monogamous couples who identify as being in the LGBTQIA+ community. (For information on an alternative study for heterosexual couples called StepUp please see [HERE](#)).**
- **PACT is being conducted by researchers from Victoria and New South Wales and has been approved by the Alfred Hospital Ethics Committee.**
- To participate and for more information visit: [HTTPS://www.mshc.org.au/research/research-studies/pact-study](https://www.mshc.org.au/research/research-studies/pact-study)
- BV is a common vaginal condition among women and people with a vagina which often comes back even after antibiotic treatment.
- BV is the most common cause of **abnormal vaginal discharge in women of reproductive age affecting between 12 - 30% of women, suggesting it may currently affect at least 1 million Australian women.**
- BV can cause distress to affected individuals and can be associated with important complications such as:
 - miscarriage
 - premature birth
 - low birth weight
 - pelvic infection
 - increased risk of HIV and sexually transmissible infections
- The current recommended treatment for BV is oral or vaginal antibiotics.



Stay up-to-date with COVID-19 information and COVID-19 vaccination



- COVID community transmission is increasing and staying up to date with your vaccination can protect you from getting very sick.
- **Protect yourself and your loved ones from COVID with these 6 steps:**
 - Wear a mask
 - Stay home if sick
 - Test if you have symptoms
 - Let fresh air in or meet outdoors
 - Stay up to date with your vaccinations
 - Talk to your GP about COVID medicines.
- A COVID booster vaccine, as well as an additional dose, is available for eligible people.
- All information COVID-19 related information can be found at <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/coronaviruses-covid-19-victoria> website.

