



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Oklahoma HMO provides tips for enjoying a safe, healthy summer**

*During the summer months, trips to the emergency room can increase by 15 to 27 percent*

**OKLAHOMA** – Visits to the emergency room can increase by as much as 15 to 27 percent over the summer months, according to a report in MD Magazine. This month, GlobalHealth, an Oklahoma-based health maintenance organization (HMO), is encouraging Oklahomans to take precautions and safely enjoy summertime activities.

“From sunburns to dehydration, the hot summer months can be a dangerous time if individuals are unprepared,” said Dr. Wesley Williams, medical director at GlobalHealth. “It is important to take precautions to stay safe in the heat.”

With warmer weather and more activities outside during the summer, GlobalHealth is offering the following summer safety tips:

**Drink water.** Keep yourself hydrated by drinking plenty of water. According to WebMD, drinking 15-20 ounces of water one-to-two hours prior to activity prepares your body for summer fun. Make sure to continue hydrating throughout the day – you are at a much higher risk of heat exhaustion during the warmer summer months. Avoid highly caffeinated beverages, especially while involved in rigorous physical activities, and limit alcoholic beverages to safe amounts. These beverages can dehydrate your body and leave you more vulnerable to heat exhaustion.

**Wear sunscreen.** You will also need to protect your skin from sun exposure. Use generous amounts of sunscreen and select at least SPF30. Reapply sunscreen every two hours, and immediately after swimming or heavy sweating. Also, with prolonged sun exposure, wear sunglasses and hats to protect your eyes and head from harmful ultraviolet rays (UV). According to the Mayo Clinic, skin is most vulnerable to the sun between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. This time frame is considered peak sun hours and the highest levels of UV radiation are emitted during this time.

**Eat healthy.** Enjoy the healthy foods that summer brings. Fresh fruit and vegetables are delicious and readily available. Check for local farmers markets to increase your selection and find organic produce. Summer is a great time to grill and can be a great time for meals with fish

and poultry. These two meats have lots of flavor and are a healthy protein choice. Consider adding cottage cheese or yogurt to a salad, or add nuts, such as almonds and walnuts, to give your salad an additional protein boost.

**Get outside.** Although the sun can be damaging to your skin in large quantities, the sun creates vitamin D-3 when it hits the skin. Vitamin D-3 is important to bone health and metabolic function. It can also help you sleep better and help your immune system function, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Try a new outdoor activity with family and friends, however limit yourself to those you can safely enjoy without harming yourself. When you go on adventures, remember the insect repellent and first-aid kit to fix small problems if they arise.

### **About GlobalHealth**

GlobalHealth is changing health insurance in Oklahoma. As an industry leader, GlobalHealth is an Oklahoma-based health maintenance organization covering more than 44,000 individuals in all 77 Oklahoma counties. Working proactively with each member, GlobalHealth engages a personalized management plan to address their specific needs and ensure the best possible health outcomes. GlobalHealth utilizes cutting edge, predictive data technology as a foundation to deliver improved healthcare as part of its commitment to making health insurance more affordable. Its membership includes state and education employees, federal employees, municipal employees, Medicare Advantage members and private employers. GlobalHealth employs more than 250 associates throughout Oklahoma. To learn more, visit [www.GlobalHealth.com](http://www.GlobalHealth.com).

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