



Stewardship of the Body
By Virginia Esslinger, RN



“I give you thanks that I am fearfully, wonderfully made” (Ps. 139)

Summer Issues

Swimmer’s Itch

What causes swimmer’s itch?

The rash known as swimmer’s itch is caused by parasites that migrate from freshwater snails and waterfowl into lakes and ponds. Not all lakes contain parasites. The risk depends on factors such as air and water temperatures, which have to be warm enough for snails to reproduce and grow (generally during the late summer months). The parasites are more likely to be found in shallow areas and along shorelines.

How long does it last?

Usually after a few days the organisms die and the rash clears up.

Is it contagious? No

How can it be prevented?

- Choose swimming spots carefully. Avoid areas where swimmer’s itch has occurred before. Stay away from marshy areas where snails are commonly found.
- Don’t linger too long at the shoreline. Head to deeper water for your swim, if you are a strong swimmer.
- Rinse off after swimming immediately with clean water, then vigorously dry your skin with a towel.
- Remove your swimsuit as soon as possible after swimming and launder it often.

Source: Mayo Clinic Women’s Healthsource, August, 2009

Bicycle Safety

- **Always wear a bike helmet.** Make sure your bike helmet is approved by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. It should fit snugly and comfortably without obstructing your vision. Most bike helmets should be replaced every 5 years and any helmet worn during a serious fall should be replaced.
- **Make sure the bike you are riding is the right fit for you.** Handlebar style and placement and seat height are important factors in a good fit. Bike shops can help evaluate the proper fit for you.
- **Make sure you know how the brakes and gear systems work** and how they respond when engaged.
- **Wear suitable clothing when biking.** Bright colors are best. Avoid loose clothing that may get caught in gears or wheels. Pant leg clips can help. Shoes should be closed toe and ones that do not easily slip off of the pedals.
- **Avoid pitfalls** such as loose gravel or slippery surfaces. Ride during the day, not at night.

Source: Mayo Clinic Health Letter, July 2009