

# Surf's up! How to plan for a safe beach vacation

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(HealthDay)—Heading to the beach this summer? Make safety part of

your vacation planning.

Sun protection belongs at the top of your packing list. Must-haves include sunscreen, sunglasses, [protective clothing](#) and a hat, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration says.

Here are some of the agency's other recommendations:

Don't use tanning beds to pre-tan before a beach vacation. The lamps emit harmful ultraviolet rays that can damage your skin. Also, be aware that spray tans and bronzers do not protect against UV rays.

Make a list of medications you need to take, and get enough to last the trip. Keep your medicines with you when traveling. Also, carry a detailed list of what medicines you take and have your [health care provider](#)'s contact information in case you need medical care while you're away.

If you wear [contact lenses](#), pack enough for the entire vacation. Don't forget to take glasses in case your eyes get irritated from your contact lenses. Never expose your contact lenses to saliva or non-sterile water, including that from the tap, bottle or ocean. And remove your contacts before swimming or getting in a hot tub.

Vacation can tempt you to try something new. But, think twice before getting a tattoo. Doing so can put you at risk for serious infections like HIV or hepatitis if unclean tools, practices or products are used. Also, tattoo inks can cause allergic or other bad reactions, the FDA said in a news release.

Be sure to drink plenty of water and to eat healthy. For example, when you're at a buffet, first fill your plate with fruits, vegetables and whole grains, and then add the meat, fish or other protein sources.

**More information:** The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more on [travelers' health](#).

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