



Hot-weather cures doctors swear by

The scorching August sun can wreak havoc on even the healthiest of kids. So we asked top doctors for the fast-acting remedies they “prescribe” to their own children when the kids get sidelined by summer heat

FOR PRICKLY HEAT *An oatmeal soak*

“As a kid, my mom always treated my prickly heat rash with fine-ground colloidal oatmeal, and I do the same for my children,” says mother-of-three Deborah Ann Mulligan, M.D., a professor of pediatrics at the Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. On hot, humid days, sweat ducts can get plugged and cause an itchy rash, but oatmeal boasts anti-inflammatory properties that help calm the itch.

“I simply add a few tablespoons of store-bought oatmeal bath [like Aveeno Soothing Bath Treatment, \$7 for 8 single-use packets, drugstore.com] to tepid water as it flows into the tub, stirring well so it dissolves,” says Dr. Mulligan. “Then my girls soak for about 10 minutes.” To get rid of the sticky residue, she gives the kids a post-bath rinse with luke-warm water and blots them dry with a towel. “Never rub,” she says. “This can cause more irritation.” The bath helps them feel better before they even dry off, says Dr. Mulligan, who gives them up to three short soaks a day to ease the itch.



FOR HEAT HEADACHES *Slushies*

“My kids can get very dehydrated after spending a summer afternoon biking in the neighborhood,” says mother-of-two Nina Shapiro, M.D., director of pediatric ear, nose and throat at the Mattel Children’s Hospital UCLA. So when they come home complaining of headaches from the heat, Dr. Shapiro grabs the blender. “I pour in ½ cup of cold water, ¼ cup of crushed ice, 2 tsp. of sugar, ½ tsp. of salt and the juice of one lemon and mix,” she says. “It’s a little tart, like sour gummy worms, and the kids love it.” More important, it provides a perfect combination of dehydration-defeating sugar, electrolytes and water to ease head pain within about 10 minutes.

FOR HEATSTROKE *This hat trick*

“My youngest went from excited to fatigued very quickly in the intense sun at a baseball game last summer,” remembers Erum N. Ilyas, M.D., a dermatologist and mother of three in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania. Fearing heatstroke—which occurs when the body overheats and strains the heart, causing it to pump less blood to vital organs—she flashed back to her own childhood, when a classmate had heatstroke and Dr. Ilyas’s mom, a pediatrician, poured a cold soda all over the child. “Directly cooling the skin quickly stopped his tremors,” says Dr. Ilyas. So she took off her son’s baseball hat, drenched it with water from an icy bottle and put the hat back on his head while they searched for shade. “Once we found a shady spot, he sat and had a sports drink,” says Dr. Ilyas. “Now we were cooling the body externally *and* internally.”*

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