

# the healthy swimmer



J. Carillet

## Sun Tips

Summer is just around the corner, and it's time to prepare for more outdoor activities. Are you ready to protect yourself from the sun's potentially harmful ultraviolet rays? Bullfrog, a U.S. Masters Swimming corporate partner, offers useful sun tips for consumers. According to Bullfrog, skin can burn even on overcast or cloudy days. Just because it's cloudy outside doesn't mean you are safe from sun damage. The UVA and UVB rays easily penetrate clouds and haze. Look for labeling that includes SPF, which stands for sun protection factor. SPF indicates

how long you may stay in the sun without burning from UVB light, and the American Academy of Dermatologists recommends wearing a sunscreen of at least SPF 15. Make sure to protect your lips, ears, under your eyes and other areas of exposed skin, and reapply frequently – especially when perspiring or participating in aquatic activities. Bullfrog offers a wide range of protective products, including the new Mosquito Coast SPF 30 Sunblock with Insect Repellent. <<<

>>> For more details, visit the Bullfrog website at [www.bullfrogsunblock.com](http://www.bullfrogsunblock.com).

## Obama Forms Food Safety Working Group

President Barack Obama recently announced changes to modernize food safety laws, including the formation of a federal Food Safety Working Group aimed at upgrading food safety laws in the United States. He named former New York City health chief Margaret A. Hamburg as his new FDA commissioner.

"There are certain things only a government can do, and one of those things is ensuring that the foods we eat, and the medicines we take, are safe and do not cause us harm," President Obama said. The president plans to ask Congress for \$1 billion for additional inspectors and lab modernization. He also announced plans for the Agriculture Department to move ahead with a ban of sick or disabled cattle from the nation's food supply. The changes follow several recent incidents of illness from pathogens in food. <<<

## Measuring Fat

Most of us have our own ways of assessing how fat we are. We feel our pants getting snug – or loose. But there are more objective ways to answer the question. The January 2009 issue of the Harvard Health Letter provides a guide to three measures of fatness.

According to the article, taking your weight in kilograms and dividing it by the square of your height in meters is one method of computing body mass index, or BMI. In most people, the easily calculated BMI correlates with overall body fat. It's also a good measure of health risk: As a rule, when BMIs go up, so do deaths, particularly from cardiovascular disease. However, BMI doesn't distinguish whether the pounds are from fat or from fat-free tissue such as muscle and bone – and it doesn't tell us about the type of fat we're carrying. The type of fat that builds up in the abdomen is believed to be particularly unhealthy.

Waist measurement puts a different spin on obesity. It's



Jonathan Downey

no longer about weight or total body fat, but about the metabolically active fat that collects around the organs in the abdomen. Waist circumference is a better predictor of diabetes than BMI, and is a good indicator of heart disease risk. Still, waist measurement hasn't become part of routine medical practice for several reasons. There is some uncertainty about exactly where the waist should be measured, although navel-level is widely accepted. The definition of too large a waist may need revision. Some studies show that health risks start well before the current cutoffs of 40 inches for men and 35 inches for women.

Waist-to-hip ratio is a simple calculation: waist circumference divided by hip circumference.

A small waist combined with big hips yields a smaller number than a big waist with small hips – and smaller is better when it comes to WHR. For women, the risk for heart disease, stroke and other health problems starts to climb at a ratio of about 0.85, so that is often set as the cutoff for a "good" ratio. For men, the cutoff seems to be about 0.90. Waist circumference measurement has eclipsed WHR, but the WHR may be ready for a comeback. Research shows that WHR is more strongly associated with heart disease than waist circumference alone. By taking hip circumference into account, the ratio is more sensitive to the difference between dangerous abdominal fat and the less harmful layer of fat we carry under the skin throughout the body.

The Harvard Health Letter is available from Harvard Health Publications, the publishing division of Harvard Medical School. <<<  
>>> For additional details, go to [www.health.harvard.edu/health](http://www.health.harvard.edu/health).

## Handbook Offers Safety Information

The National Swimming Pool Foundation offers valuable information to help understand and prevent drowning, recreational water illness, suction entrapment, evisceration, diving accidents, electrocutions, chemical hazards, and slips and falls. The 2009 edition of the "NSPF Pool & Spa Operator Handbook" is now available for purchase in English and Spanish with measurements in both U.S. and metric units. This fundamental training and reference manual is published by the NSPF for professionals who help protect those who use aquatic venues, including operators, health officials, service technicians, retailers, property managers and manufacturers. Industry leaders recognize the handbook as the single most important resource for the recreational water industry.

"The beauty of the new handbook is not only apparent



by looking at the new cover design, which is based on an original artistic painting created for NSPF," says Alex Antoniou, Ph.D., NSPF director of educational programs. "A team of editorial advisors and staff members have worked diligently over the past year to include many important updates and changes to both the content and format," he adds. <<< >>> Visit [www.nspf.org](http://www.nspf.org) and [www.eProAcademy.org](http://www.eProAcademy.org) for more information.



Maitca

## Is Your Pool Drain Safe?

A new federal law, the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act, now provides incentives for states to require pool drain safety to prevent incidents of injury and death related to pool and spa drains. According to the Association of Pool and Spa Professionals, the new federal mandates address two issues: the manufacture, import and sale of suction outlet fittings (drain fittings and covers), and entrapment avoidance systems in public pools and spas. But how do you know if your pool or spa drain is safe? Last year, APSP published frequently asked questions about the Federal Pool and Spa Safety Act, with requirements, specifications and drain cover labeling information. <<<

>>> For more details, visit the APSP website at [www.apsp.org](http://www.apsp.org).

## reader recipe

Shrimp is available year-round, but the season for this delicacy is typically December through May. Shrimp are swimming, decapod (10-footed) crustaceans, harvested around the world in both fresh and salt water. Adult shrimp live close to the bottom, often in schools, and can swim backwards swiftly. They are an important food source for larger sea creatures.

Shrimp have been farmed for centuries in Asia, and can be traced back as far as the 15th century. In the 1990s, shrimp was shunned for its high cholesterol. But by 1996, a study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* found that although high in cholesterol, shrimp did not adversely affect production of cholesterol in the body.

Low in fat and calories, shrimp contains beneficial doses of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin B12 and niacin. Shrimp are also mineral-rich, supplying iron, zinc and copper.

### Thai Shrimp

Bronwyn Lewis of Virginia Masters contributes this easy, fast and delicious dish. Start to finish in 30 minutes or less!

- 4 **cloves garlic, peeled**
- 1 **medium onion, diced**
- 1 **1-inch piece fresh ginger root**
- 1 **pound medium shrimp**
- 1 **fresh jalapeno pepper, seeded**
- 1 **head broccoli, chopped and steamed**
- ½ **tsp salt**
- 2 **medium carrots, diced**
- ½ **tsp ground turmeric**
- 4 **baby bella mushrooms, diced**
- 2 **Tbs safflower oil**
- 1 **cup coconut milk**
- 3 **Tbs fresh chopped basil leaves**

Combine garlic, ginger, jalapeno, salt, turmeric in food processor and process to a smooth paste. Set aside.

Heat oil in skillet over medium heat. Add onions and cook until translucent, stirring frequently. Mix in paste. Cook a few minutes to release the oils.

Add carrots, mushrooms, onions and cook till shrimp is pink, then add the coconut milk. Simmer about 5 minutes. Add broccoli, continuing to simmer till hot sauce starts to thicken. Stir in fresh basil during last minute of cooking. 4 servings.

Serve over rice.

#### Serves 4

Calories per serving: 500

Calories of fat per serving: 200

>>> **Do you have a recipe our readers would enjoy?** Send it to [editor@USMS.org](mailto:editor@USMS.org), or mail to: Reader Recipe, c/o Bill Volckening, 1220 NW 119th Place, Portland, OR 97229.

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