

JULY 2020

THE NEXT STEP

Dr. Andrew Schneider

Your first step towards a pain-free life



What's the Problem with Summer Sandals?

It's hot, it's humid, and we're still trying to spend more time outside to maintain social ties while minimizing our COVID-19 risk. I know that sandal season is officially here to stay. At least for the next few months.

Of course, flip-flops are always appealing. They're cheap, fairly comfortable and always easy to slip on-and-off. But consider this: wearing flip-flops is basically the same as going barefoot. Yes, flip-flops protect the bottom of your feet from sharp objects and contagious foot fungi, but that's about all that they do well. Plus, they leave your toes completely unprotected, so you're vulnerable to injuries from bumping into hard objects or, worse, from anything that drops on your feet or toes.

They are also completely flat, meaning that flip-flops offer absolutely no arch support. Without arch support, you may be dealing with the chronic heel pain of plantar fasciitis (especially if you spent quarantine going barefoot in your house, which will have already strained those tendons on the bottom of your feet.)

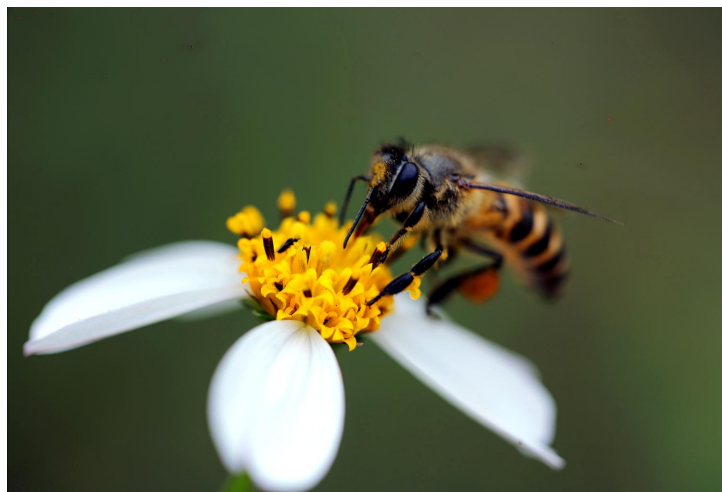
So, if flip-flops are a no, what shoes should you choose?

Look for options with toe caps and ankle straps. Choose low wedge heels. And, when possible, select breathable fabric over plastic materials. These features will go a long way towards keep foot and heel problems from ruining your summer of the outdoors.

How to Minimize Your Summer Allergy Symptoms

Summer allergies are a major pain, but there are a few things you can do to minimize your reactions:

1. Wear clothing made of natural fibers like cotton. As it turns out, synthetic fibers actually create electrical charges that draw pollen to your body.
2. Avoid “male” trees, since they are the ones that give off the worst allergy-triggering pollen. How can you tell which trees are female? Look for flowering, seed bearing trees. Please note: while some trees are non-binary, the ones with bold flowers tend to produce less pollen. And they look so pretty in your garden, too!



3. Take your exercise indoors. While there's plenty of benefits associated with outdoor exercise, spending long periods outdoors, especially when your breath is coming faster, can trigger worse allergy symptoms. Instead, consider an indoor workout. Which isn't the worst idea anyways, since you'll be less likely to dehydrate and more likely to maintain stamina without the grueling outdoor heat.

Want more updates? Check out our blog, website, or social medias, we'll keep you on track!



Happy Sweet 16 Daniella!

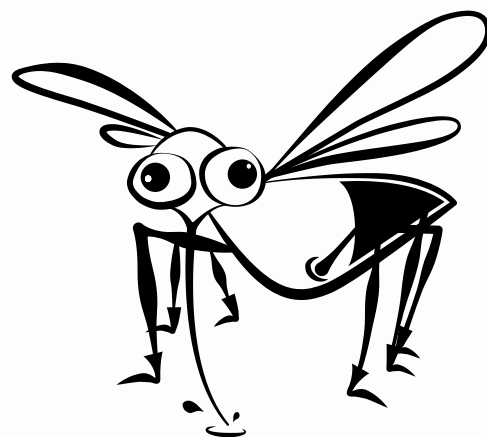
While the kids are upset that camp had been cancelled this summer, there is a silver lining for the Schneider family. We were together for the first time in years to celebrate Daniella's birthday. And not just any birthday...her Sweet 16!

Daniella loves the yard signs (shoutout to cardmyyard.com) and had her friends come over to sit in the yard (socially distanced) to catch up. We had her favorite dinner...waffles...and lots of family time together.



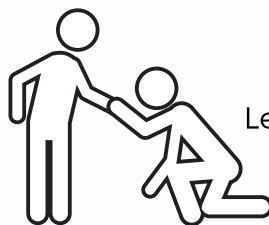
What You Need to Know about Mosquitos and Disease

While you may not realize this, mosquito bites are more than just an itchy nuisance. In fact, even here in Houston, mosquito bites could spread disease. As if summer 2020 couldn't get more stressful, we've already got a confirmed case of mosquito-related West Nile Virus here in Harris County.



What's West Nile, you may be wondering?

According to the CDC, West Nile virus (WNV) is the leading cause of mosquito-borne disease in the continental United States. It is most commonly spread to people by the bite of an infected mosquito. Cases of WNV occur during mosquito season, which starts in the summer and continues through fall. There are no vaccines to prevent or medications to treat WNV. And it can be serious: about 1 in 5 people who are infected develop a fever and other symptoms. About 1 out of 150 infected people develop a serious, sometimes fatal, illness. So, how can you stay safe this summer? **Reduce your risk of WNV by using insect repellent and wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants to prevent mosquito bites.**



How far can you go?

Let us help! Learn more here and start moving toward a pain free life

6 Tips for Coping with COVID Stress

Let's face it, my fellow Houstonians, the pandemic-related news is scary right now. You wouldn't be alone if you were feeling stressed. But chronic stress can be incredibly damaging to your health. So, while it's crucial for you to stay safe and cautious during the pandemic, you also need to preserve your mental health with relaxation techniques.

1. Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including those on social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting. Once you've absorbed the important information, such as what to do if you think you are sick, disconnecting from technology can be very therapeutic.
2. Take care of your body, with mild to moderate exercise and high-quality, nutritional meals. Minimize drug and alcohol use, as these can boost your stress reactions after an initial calming influence.
3. Prioritize sleep, aiming for at least 8 hours each night.
4. Embrace your hobbies, or activities that you enjoy and that make you smile.
5. Phone a friend: talk about everything from your concerns to your new favorite quarantine recipes. And, if you are part of a larger community, through your faith, your profession or your hobbies, seek out virtual ways to come together as a group.
6. Listen to the voice of calm: NPR has curated a de-stressing playlist on Spotify, providing daily updates. Recs include topics ranging from How to Stay Busy and Manage Anxiety to Coronavirus News from NPR.

From the desk of Dr. Andrew Schneider



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