

Stay Safe on the 4th of July!

People everywhere are fascinated by fireworks -- by the mystery and splendor that light the night sky or turn a backyard into a festival of light and sound. But as dazzling as fireworks can be, they can also be harmful if used improperly.

The National Council on Fireworks Safety (NCFS) urges you to put safety first when celebrating this Fourth of July. The incidence of fireworks-related injuries has dropped dramatically during the past 10 years, according to Ann Crampton, executive director of the NCFS. But she says it can be cut further by following a few simple guidelines:

- A responsible adult should supervise all fireworks activities.
- Never give fireworks to young children.
- Always purchase fireworks from reliable sources.
- Follow label directions carefully.
- Never point or throw fireworks at another person.
- Use fireworks outdoors in a clear area away from buildings and vehicles.
- Never carry fireworks in your pocket or shoot them in metal or glass containers.
- Light them one at a time, then move back quickly.
- Don't experiment with homemade fireworks.
- Observe local laws and use common sense.
- Sparklers, fountains and other items that many states allow for use by consumers are not appropriate when a large crowd is present.

- If attending a community display, leave your own fireworks at home -- there will be plenty of excitement provided by the display.

For more information on Fireworks safety, visit the National Council on Fireworks Safety web site.

Compiled by St. Andrew's Health Center staff. Please visit our website at www.standrewshealth.com.