It's the start of the spring season, which means more fun in the sun! The warmer temperatures bring everyone outside so here are some tips to keep you and your family safe and healthy this season.

**BEWARE OF BUGS!**
Warmer temperatures attract bugs, such as mosquitoes and ticks. These bugs can transmit a number of diseases so take the time to follow these tips in order to prevent them from plaguing you and your family!

- Use an appropriate insect and tick repellant (with DEET). Prime mosquito-biting hours are usually from dusk to dawn, but ticks are out at all times.
- After coming indoors, shower as soon as possible. Wash and tumble dry your clothes. Check for ticks on your bodies, as well as clothing. Ticks are easy to pick off with tweezers.
- Don’t forget to protect your pets as well! Be sure that they are seen by a veterinarian and de-wormed while also keeping them on a flea and tick control program.

**SAFE FOOD HANDLING**
Outdoor grilling is always a must this season! Follow these tips to stay healthy when grilling meat.

- Use a meat thermometer to ensure that your meat and poultry are cooked thoroughly. Ground beef should be cooked to an internal temperature of 160°F.
- Immediately wash hands and surfaces with soap and water that have been touched by raw meat.
- Never use the same pan used to hold the raw meat unless you wash it first. Use a fresh platter for the cooked meat. Refrigerate leftovers promptly after eating.

**POOL SAFETY**
Protect yourself the sun and from illnesses caused by contaminants or chemicals in recreational water.

- Don’t swim if you have diarrhea, don’t swallow pool water, and take a shower before swimming.
- Use sunscreen at all times with at least SPF 15 and reapply often.
- Cover up with clothing, wear a brimmed hat, and wear sunglasses to block UVA and UVB rays.

**BACKYARD SAFETY**
Preventing insect and rodent infestation is key to keeping your backyard healthy.

- Eliminate or seal rodent food sources, such as pet food, bird feeders, and garbage cans.
- Trim grass and shrubbery within 100 feet of your home.
- Remove any items that may collect standing water, such as buckets, old tires, and toys. Mosquitoes can breed in these areas in a matter of days and remove leaf litter or woodpiles to prevent ticks.