

Prom Health and Safety Tips

Prom is one of the highlights of the high school experience. While planning and enjoying the big night, make smart decisions to help keep you safe and lower stress. If you or someone you know is going to the prom, here are a few tips to help make it fun and safe.

Look and Feel Great

Get in shape slowly and wisely.

Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, eat less junk food (i.e. foods and drinks high in calories, with saturated fat, or with added sugars), and don't crash diet. Think about what you drink. Choose drinks with no or low calories and fat, such as water, sparkling water, or unsweetened tea. Find fun ways to stay active, such as walking, dancing, gardening, swimming, and more. Be active for 60 minutes a day most days of the week. Get plenty of sleep.

Protect your skin.

Enjoy the skin you're in, and protect it. You don't need a tan to be beautiful, and you definitely don't need a sunburn. Just a few serious sunburns can increase your risk for skin cancer later in life. Make sure you protect yourself from the harmful effects of UV rays. Avoid indoor and outdoor tanning, and use a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher.

Follow directions, cautions, and warnings on hair products.

If you're changing hairstyles or hair color on your own, follow all directions, cautions, and warnings on the label. Dyes and relaxers can hurt skin, hair, and eyes. Do a patch test before using dye on your hair. If a rash develops, don't use the dye. Never dye eyebrows or eyelashes, as it might cause blindness. If in doubt, let the professionals handle it.

Test cosmetics before use.

For some people, using cosmetics like make-up or deodorant may cause itching, redness, rash, sneezing, or wheezing. Allergies may happen the first time a product is used or after multiple uses. Always test a product in a small area first. Follow all directions, cautions, and warnings on the label. Stop using the product if problems develop. Remove it before bedtime to prevent skin and eye irritation.

Wear comfortable shoes.

High heels may be in style, but they can increase your chances of falling if they're too high, uncomfortable, or not something you usually wear. Prevent injury and wear comfortable footwear that won't affect how you walk or dance.

Stress Less

Watch your budget.

If cost is an issue, look for alternatives to spending a lot of money. Expensive doesn't necessarily mean better.

Plan ahead for safety.

Tell family what your plans are ahead of time. Make an agreement with friends to keep a check on each other during the evening. Be sure someone you trust is available for you to call if your plans change or you need help.

Remember that you don't need a date to have fun.

Whether you plan to go with a date, with friends, or on your own, the point is to have a good time. Going with a group or meeting friends at the event can be just as fun as going with one special person. Whether you're going solo or with a group, make sure you don't drink and drive.

Just say no.

Some people feel pressured to drink, smoke, use drugs, or have sex on prom night by friends or the media. However, drinking is responsible for over 4500 deaths among young people each year and is associated with other problems like STDs and unintended pregnancy. Alcohol and drugs impair judgment and may result in being harmed or harming others. Just because others do something doesn't make it a good idea or right for you. It's OK to say no.

Protect Yourself

Travel safely.

Teen drivers ages 16 to 19 are four times more likely than older drivers to crash. Always wear a safety belt. Don't drink and drive, and don't get in a car with a driver who has been drinking.

Respect yourself.

Dating abuse is a very real issue for many people. The abuse can be verbal, emotional, physical, or sexual. Respect yourself and others, avoid alcohol and drugs, and tell family or call 911 if you or someone you know is being abused.

Know before you go to after-parties.

If you plan to go to an after-prom party, be sure it is adult-supervised and has an observed start and end time. Go with a “buddy” to ensure each other’s safety. Avoid using alcohol and drugs.

Have Fun!

Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention