Explosions, alcohol, delicious grilled foods - those are all the things that made America great. But in combination, they make it America’s deadliest day. Add in heat, swimming and cars and it's easy to recognize why hospital emergency rooms staff up for July 4th.

Here’s a short rundown.

**Fireworks**

The US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) looked at fireworks injuries in the weeks surrounding July 4th and found that an average of 200 people went to the emergency room every day with fireworks-related injuries, with more than half of those injuries being burns. These injuries can mainly be attributed to firecrackers, sparklers, bottle rockets, and Roman candles. In 2011, fireworks caused an estimated 17,900 fires, resulting in 8 deaths, 400 injuries, and $32 million in property damage. While they may be spectacular and festive, they are still explosives. So, think about leaving the fireworks to the professionals this year. But, if you do plan to put on your own fireworks show, be sure to follow the

**Heat**

The warm July weather can pose serious health hazards, including heatstroke, heat exhaustion, and dehydration (which the alcoholic beverages don’t help with). With especially high temperatures all over the country this week, throw a water or two in the mix and keep cool in the shade.

**Drowning**

Due to the heat, many people unsurprisingly end up in a pool or at the beach for the fourth,
causing the holiday to statistically be the most unsafe day to swim. Make sure you never swim alone and always supervise children around any body of water.

Driving

More people are hurt in car accidents every year on the Fourth than fireworks. With all the travel going on, more cars are on the road than normal, increasing the chance of car accidents. An average of 118.4 lives are lost every year. Alcohol obviously plays a role in this danger. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) reported that more people die in car accidents on Independence Day than any other day of the year, the second worst day being January 1st. The most dangerous time to be on the road is from 6:00 PM on July 3rd to midnight on July 5th. Buckle up, slow down, and drive carefully.

Alcohol

Drinking and fireworks. Drinking and heat. Drinking and swimming. Drinking and Driving. Alcohol exacerbates the danger in every one of these activities. Avoid becoming a statistic by drinking responsibly. Get an Uber or at least dupe a gullible friend into being the designated driver. If you need help on that last part here is a science bet you can never lose: Place a bottle lying down on a table, place a small ball of paper in front of it. Bet they can't blow the ball into the bottle. Get your phone out to record the hilarity.

Why? When they blow towards the bottle, the air pressure inside it increases which leads to air flowing out. This air pushes the ball of paper away from the opening.

Armed with one science trick and one time when the precautionary principle is right, have a safe and fun time the next time you celebrate our Independence Day. Try not to be a statistic!

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