

## Special Spring Break 2018 Addition of the Blue Cougar



Each year, upwards of 1.5 million students go on spring break\*, a peak travel season that poses many risks for college-aged men and women. The truth is that the spring break environment - however fun - can lead to negative consequences such as sexual assault, alcohol poisoning, serious injuries and more. This frightening reality is why the Personal Safety Expert is distributing top 10 tips to reduce safety and health risks this vacation season.

While a safety mindset should be applied to every part of your vacation (alcohol-related or not), we know that binge drinking plays a significant role in spring break safety risks. In fact, 91% of parents think spring break marketing and drink promotions should be stopped - but free or cheap alcohol access was an important factor in deciding to go on a spring break trip for two in five women\*\*.

### Road Trips

1. Arrive safely – Driving through the night to make it down to South Padre or Port Aransas or other sunny destinations is common for spring breakers. But the National Safety Council says traffic death rates are three times greater at night than during the day. If you can't avoid night driving, have at least one person stay awake to talk to driver.

2. Before driving to your destination, have your car checked out by a mechanic to ensure it can make a long trip.
3. Always keep your car doors locked and your windows up high enough that no one can reach in.
4. Drive on heavily-traveled highways and avoid making your way too far off of the interstate. Being lost decreases your vigilance and increases the possibility that you could become the victim of a crime.
5. Don't pick up hitchhikers or stop for anyone on the side of the road. You never know who the person might be or what they are capable of doing if they sense an opportunity for personal gain.
6. If you have car trouble, especially if you are driving alone, stay in your car with your doors and windows locked and call police for assistance. Be wary of individuals who stop to help.
7. Do not allow anyone in the car to drink alcohol. Many states have open container laws that prohibit any person in a car from drinking alcohol.
8. If you are tired, trade-off drivers or stop for the night. A night in a motel is cheaper than the potential costs of falling asleep at the wheel. You can also stop at a rest stop to nap, but make sure you keep your doors locked. Rest stops are available on U.S. highways every couple of hours. Some states may restrict the length of time one can stay at a rest stop.



### Sun and Fun

- Always remember to wear eye protection
- Sunscreen is a must!

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- Wear a hat to protect your head and ears
- Keep hydrated with plenty of water
- DO NOT overexpose your body to the sun
- After a long day in the sun moisturizing is essential
- If you burn slightly use aloe.
- If you are seeing spots or nausea are your symptoms you may want to contact a doctor to make sure that you do not have sun poisoning, because it can happen.
- If you burn, do not lay in the sun the next day because it will only get worse

## Here are some tips to help drinkers and non-drinkers alike stay safe on spring break:

1. Don't take chances at your hotel. Lock the doors, and secure important belongings like passports and wallets in the safe. **A door stop alarm** is portable and can alert you if someone tries to break-in. Make sure it's in your suitcase this spring break.
2. Be smart about who you give personal information out to - don't tell new acquaintances
3. If you need help ask for it. If there's an emergency don't rely on a bystander to call for help. Call for help yourself to be sure first responders or police gets the message.
4. DO NOT GIVE OUT your hotel or room number. You never know who has innocent or dangerous intentions.
5. Make sure you know the name and address of your hotel or take a hotel business card out with you so you can give to a cab driver. This is especially important if you don't speak the local language.
6. The Buddy System – it works! We do NOT recommend you leave a party with a stranger, it's always best to take a friend with you. If for whatever reason you do leave without your friends, give them details about where you're going and when to expect you back.
7. Practice safe drinking – take turns so that one friend in the group per night will plan on minimal drinking to look out for everyone.
8. Other good habits – watching your cup or glass, and only accept drinks that you've watched get made or poured in front of you.

## Safer Sex

1. Just because you're on spring break, doesn't mean you have to engage in sexual activity!
2. Watch your alcohol intake. 70% of college students admit to engaging in sexual activity they wouldn't normally engage in because they were drinking.
3. Always use a condom and/or dental dam. Carry them with you and refuse to have any kind of sexual relations with your potential partner if they don't agree to using them.
4. If you choose to "hook up," be careful of who it's with. Spring break is a great time for would-be assailants to prey on unsuspecting, drinking college students. Make sure your friends see the person, know his/her name, and where you are going.
5. Trust your instincts - if it feels uncomfortable, don't do it! Spring break is much more enjoyable without regrets for what you did the night before.