

Atrium Health Navicent Urges Caution when Handling Fireworks this Fourth of July Holiday *Majority of fireworks-related injuries happen during Independence Day and New Year's holidays*

MACON, Ga., July 2, 2024 – As our nation prepares to celebrate the Independence Day holiday with backyard barbeques and festive fireworks, Atrium Health Navicent physicians urge everyone to keep safety in mind.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, an estimated 9,700 people were treated for fireworks-related injuries in U.S. hospital emergency rooms in 2023, resulting in eight deaths. About 66 percent of those injuries occurred in the weeks immediately before and immediately after the Fourth of July. Teenagers ages 15 to 19 had the highest estimated rate of fireworks-related injuries and children ages 5 to 9 had the second-highest rate.

Fireworks, including sparklers and flares, can cause serious burns as well as blast injuries that can permanently impair vision and hearing.

Physicians at Atrium Health Navicent The Medical Center, central and south Georgia's only nationally-verified Level I Trauma Center, encourage individuals to prevent firework injuries by following these tips:

- Never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks.
- Adults should supervise all fireworks activities.
- Never use fireworks while impaired by alcohol or drugs.
- Handle and use fireworks in strict accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and all warning labels.
- Light fireworks on smooth, flat surfaces, and aim them away from buildings, dry leaves, flammable materials and spectators.
- Do not try to relight fireworks that malfunction.
- Do not modify fireworks or use homemade fireworks.
- Light fireworks one at a time, then quickly move back.
- Keep a phone and a bucket of water or fire extinguisher within reach, and know first aid for burns.

"Fireworks are beautiful and exciting to watch, but they can be deadly when mishandled or misused. Keep your celebration safe by exercising caution when handling fireworks, only using fireworks labeled for consumer use, wearing eye protection and ensuring adult supervision at all times," said Dr. John Wood, medical director for the Emergency Center at Atrium Health Navicent The Medical Center. "Holidays are meant to be fun! But it's no fun when you spend them in the emergency room when fireworks-related injuries could have been prevented by taking proper precautions."

Physicians also urge revelers to avoid firing guns in celebration of the holiday. Bullets returning to the ground due to celebratory gunfire can cause serious injury or death for bystanders.

If an accident or injury occurs, seek appropriate medical treatment. For emergency situations, call 911 or seek care at the nearest emergency center. Atrium Health Navicent offers emergency care at the following locations:

- Atrium Health Navicent The Medical Center (770 Pine St., Macon)
- Atrium Health Levine Children's Beverly Knight Olson Children's Hospital (888 Pine St., Macon)
- Atrium Health Navicent Peach Emergency Department (1960 Hwy 247 Connector, Byron)
- Atrium Health Navicent Baldwin (821 North Cobb St., Milledgeville)
- Putnam General Hospital, Atrium Health Navicent Partner (101 Greensboro Road, Eatonton)

For non-life-threatening injuries, visit your nearest urgent care provider. Atrium Health Navicent provides urgent care at three Macon locations:

- Atrium Health Navicent Urgent Care North (3400 Riverside Drive, Macon)
- Atrium Health Navicent Urgent Care East (1339 Gray Highway, Macon)
- Atrium Health Navicent Urgent Care Northwest (5925 Zebulon Road, Macon)

To find a doctor, visit www.NavicentHealth.org and click “Find A Doctor.”

About Atrium Health Navicent

Atrium Health Navicent is the leading provider of health care in central and south Georgia and is committed to its mission of elevating health and well-being through compassionate care. Atrium Health Navicent is part of [Advocate Health](#), which is headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina, and is the third-largest nonprofit health system in the United States, created from the combination of Atrium Health and Advocate Aurora Health. Atrium Health Navicent provides high-quality, personalized care in 53 specialties at more than 50 facilities throughout the region. As part of the largest, integrated, nonprofit health system in the Southeast, it is also able to tap into some of the nation’s leading medical experts and specialists with Atrium Health, allowing it to provide the best care close to home – including advanced innovations in virtual medicine and care. Throughout its 125-year history in the community, Atrium Health Navicent has remained dedicated to enhancing health and wellness for individuals throughout the region through nationally recognized quality care, community health initiatives and collaborative partnerships. It is also one of the leading teaching hospitals in the region, helping to ensure viability for rural health care for the next generation. For more information, please visit www.NavicentHealth.org.

About Advocate Health

[Advocate Health](#) is the third-largest nonprofit integrated health system in the United States – created from the combination of Advocate Aurora Health and [Atrium Health](#). Providing care under the names [Advocate Health Care](#) in Illinois, Atrium Health in the Carolinas, Georgia and Alabama, and [Aurora Health Care](#) in Wisconsin, Advocate Health is a national leader in clinical innovation, health outcomes, consumer experience and value-based care, with [Wake Forest University School of Medicine](#) serving as the academic core of the enterprise. Headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina, Advocate Health serves nearly 6 million patients and is engaged in hundreds of clinical trials and research studies. It is nationally recognized for its expertise in cardiology, neurosciences, oncology, pediatrics and rehabilitation, as well as organ transplants, burn treatments and specialized musculoskeletal programs. Advocate Health employs 155,000 team members across 69 hospitals and over 1,000 care locations and offers one of the nation’s largest graduate medical education programs with over 2,000 residents and fellows across more than 200 programs. Committed to equitable care for all, Advocate Health provides nearly \$6 billion in annual community benefits.

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