

mLM: Helpful tips for warmer weather



Microcystic lymphatic malformation (mLM) is a chronic disease that can be even more challenging for patients in hot weather.

Higher temperatures can lead to increased:

Swelling and pain
in the affected area

Visibility of malformations
on the skin

Risk of bleeding from blebs

Warmth and circulation, causing more itching or irritation

Here are some simple strategies and smart suggestions for beating the heat so you can still enjoy the outdoors:

Find your fit

Clothing can make a big difference. Experiment with different fabrics and materials to determine which is most comfortable.

- Many people living with mLM find that breathable fabrics such as **cotton, linen, and bamboo** work well
- Moisture can potentially weaken or irritate the skin barrier. This is where **moisture-wicking fabrics** can be helpful
- **Lightweight or oversized fabrics may help reduce friction** on fragile skin and in areas that are in direct contact with mLM lesions
- You may also be able to avoid or **reduce irritation by choosing clothing with no tags and minimal stitching or seams** near the affected area



Stay sun safe

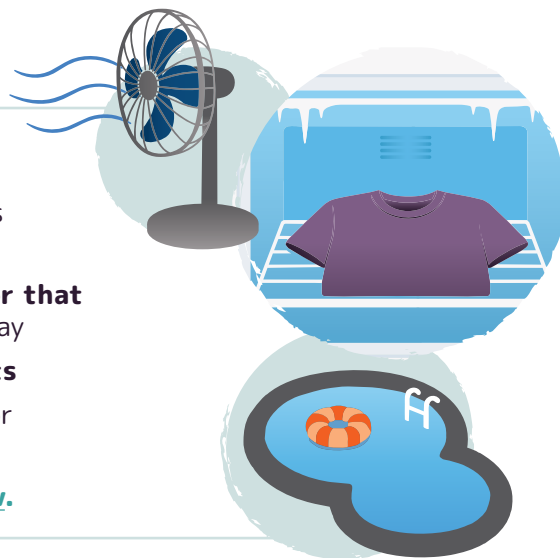
mLM lesions that are leaking or bleeding should be covered with a clean bandage. Beyond that, doctors often recommend protecting the areas around mLM lesions just like you would any other part of your body.

- **Try to limit sun exposure** when possible
- **Consider wearing UV-protective** clothing
- **Look for sunscreen that has broad-spectrum protection**
 - Sunscreen should be applied 15 minutes before going outside and reapplied every 2 hours (or after swimming). You may want to check for irritation or stinging by testing it in a small area first
 - Whether you prefer a mineral or chemical sunscreen, in a spray or cream formulation, what's important is that you **choose a sunscreen you will use consistently**

You can find more guidance on sun protection at [AAD.org](https://www.aad.org).



Play it cool



Why this works: When skin is cooled, it temporarily calms the nervous system's signaling of sensations like itch or irritation. When heat makes mLM hard to handle:

- Some people like to plan **activities that are indoor, involve water, or that are shielded from direct sunlight** during the hottest hours of the day
- When possible, opt for **air-conditioned living/working environments**
- **Placing clothing in the freezer for a few minutes** before wearing or applying cool compresses over affected areas may help provide relief

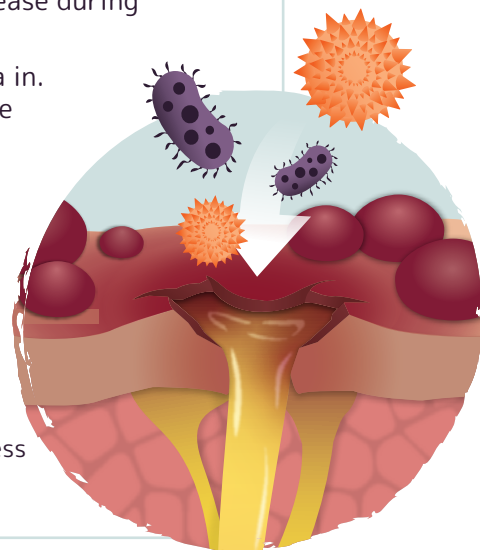
Discover additional tips for staying cool in hot weather at [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

Identifying infections

Did you know? Hospitalizations for vascular-related conditions tend to increase during periods of temperature extremes.

When mLM lesions leak or bleed, they are more susceptible to letting bacteria in. Gentle wound care, such as cleansing and covering open areas, may help reduce infection risk.

- **Cellulitis**—usually caused by a bacterial infection of a wound, or an area of skin that is no longer intact
 - **Symptoms may include** swelling, tenderness, warm skin, pain, bruising, blisters, fever, headache, chills, weakness, red streaks, or local lymph node swelling
- **Cold/Flu and viral infections**—when someone with mLM gets sick, their lymphatic system works harder, causing lymph vessels in the malformation to swell up
 - **Symptoms may include** significant increases in size, extreme tenderness, or redness



Review best practices for wound healing and care at [KidsHealth.org](https://kidshealth.org).



Heat, illness, and injury can all trigger swelling or discomfort. But if you see symptoms such as fever, spreading redness, warmth, worsening pain, or red streaks, **it's important to seek medical care promptly, as it could be an infection.** If you're ever uncertain, talk to your doctor.



Visit BEYONDmLM.com for resources, information, and everyday ways to manage mLM.



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