



High temperatures combined with humidity can be extremely hazardous, leading to life threatening illness. Heat-related illnesses are preventable, if you take the necessary precautions.

## Before Excessive Heat Situations

- **Stay informed.**
  - Monitor for heat advisories in your area at the NOAA National Weather Service. <http://www.weather.gov/>
  - Listen to local news and weather channels for health and safety updates.
- **Know the terminology.**
  - **Excessive Heat Advisory:** An excessive heat event is occurring; prolonged exposure or strenuous activity might result in a heat-related illness.
  - **Excessive Heat Warning:** Life-threatening heat is occurring. Take precautions immediately!
- **Discuss heat precautions with your family.**
  - Limit or avoid activity during the day.
  - Keep hydrated.
  - Know the signs of heat-related illnesses.
- **Be aware of high risk individuals in your neighborhood.**
  - Young children, the elderly, people with illness or chronic disease, or that are overweight.

## During Excessive Heat Situations

- **Monitor family members and others for heat-related illnesses.**
- **Stay inside and stay cool.**
  - Air-conditioning is the number one protective factor against heat-related illness and death.
  - If air conditioning is not available, spend time in public places that are air-conditioned (e.g., library, malls, and theaters).
- **Drink plenty of fluids.**
  - Drink 2-4 glasses of cool fluids (water, sports drinks) each hour.
  - Avoid drinks containing alcohol, caffeine, or large amounts of sugar – these actually cause you to lose more body fluid.
- **Eat small, but frequent meals.**
  - Avoid hot foods and heavy meals; they add heat to your body.
- **If you must be outdoors,**
  - Limit activities to morning and evening hours.
  - Avoid strenuous activities.
  - Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
  - Wear a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses and sunscreen that is SPF 15 or higher.
  - Take frequent breaks in the shade or in a cool environment.

- **Never leave children in a parked car.**
  - Each year children die from extreme heat after being left in parked vehicles.
  - Cars can heat up to dangerous temperatures very quickly – even within minutes.

## Heat-Related Illnesses

- **Heat stroke is a life-threatening situation!**
  - Occurs when the body is unable to regulate its temperature and cool itself.
  - Signs: extremely high body temperature (above 103°)
    - red, hot, dry skin (no sweating)
    - rapid, strong pulse
    - throbbing headache
    - dizziness
    - nausea
    - confusion
    - unconsciousness
  - **If you see any of these signs, get medical assistance immediately!**
- **Heat exhaustion.**
  - A milder form of heat-related illness that can develop after several days of exposure to high temperatures and inadequate or unbalanced replacement of fluids.
  - **Signs:** cool, moist, pale or flushed skin • heavy sweating • headache • nausea • dizziness • weakness
  - Cool the victim by: providing cool, nonalcoholic beverages • rest in a cool or air-conditioned environment • cool shower, bath, or sponge bath
  - If the person vomits or begins to lose consciousness, **get medical assistance immediately!**
- **Heat cramps.**
  - Muscle pains or spasms (usually in the legs or abdomen) that occur in association with loss of fluids and electrolytes.
  - Often an early sign the body is having trouble with heat.
- **Sunburn.**
  - Damage to the skin that significantly slows the skin's ability to release heat.
  - Usually minor discomfort that heals in a week.
  - Severe sunburn may require medical attention.
- **Heat rash.**
  - Skin irritation caused by excessive sweating during hot, humid weather.
  - Red cluster of pimples or small blisters; usually on the neck, chest, or folds of the skin.
  - Most common in young children; can affect any age.
  - Usually does not require medical assistance.

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