



Extreme Heat

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We all enjoy the hot days of summer, but you need to take care on days of extreme temperatures. The combination of high heat, high humidity, and other conditions can be hazardous to your health.

Are you at high risk?

Hot weather can be a risk for people who:

- Work or exercise vigorously outdoors
- Are aged 65 or older, infants, and young children
- Have diabetes, heart or lung disease, or other chronic condition.
- Have risk factors such as obesity, fever, dehydration, poor circulation, and sunburn

If you take medications regularly, ask your doctor or pharmacist if you need to be extra careful in hot weather.

Protect your Health

People suffer heat-related illness when their bodies are unable to cool properly. The body normally cools itself by sweating, but sometimes this is not enough. In these cases, a person's body temperature rises quickly. Very high body temperatures can damage the brain and other vital organs. Here's how to avoid heat-related illness:

Drink plenty of fluids

- Water is your best choice.
- Choose drinks that do not contain alcohol, caffeine, or high amounts of sugar—they can cause you to lose body fluid.
- Avoid very cold drinks because they can cause stomach cramps.

Stay cool indoors

- Keep your shades drawn and blinds closed.
- Use your stove and oven less often.
- Spend a few hours at a library, gallery, mall, or other building that is kept cool during the day.

- Use fans in or next to your window. Remember that fans alone may not provide enough cooling.
- Keep electric lights off or turned-down low.
- Take a cool bath, shower periodically, or cool down with wet towels.
- Rest as much as possible.

Dress lightly

- Wear loose-fitting, light-coloured clothes, sunglasses, and a wide-brimmed hat.
- Use a sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher and an SPF lip balm.

Plan your day

- Limit outdoor activity to morning and evening hours.
- Schedule your heaviest work during the coolest part of the day, if you're working outside.
- Spend time where it is cooler, such as near the lake or waterfront.
- Reschedule your sports activities and jogging time. Ask for policies that allow sports events to be rescheduled during heat alerts.

Pace yourself

- Rest frequently in the shade to allow your body to cool.
- Consult your doctor or pharmacist about side effects of medications.

Be a buddy

- At work, monitor the condition of your co-workers and have someone monitor you.
- It's important to have regular contact with people who have difficulty dealing with heat. Check with family, friends, and neighbours at least twice a day.

Use common sense

- Never leave infants, children, or pets in an unattended car, even with the windows open.
- Limit the time your pet spends outdoors. Provide plenty of fresh water and leave the water in a shady area.

If you supervise children

- Monitor children closely.
- Limit strenuous activity outdoors.
- Encourage children to frequently drink water or diluted fruit juices.
- Provide information to parents on how to keep children cool.
- Consider suspending outdoor activities or limiting time spent outdoors between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. Keep children in an air-conditioned place.

Know when to get help

Even short periods of high temperatures may cause serious health problems. Get medical attention immediately if you have the following symptoms:

- Rapid breathing
- Weakness or fainting
- Headache and/or confusion
- Nausea, dizziness, blurred vision
- Convulsions, high body temperature

In an emergency, call 911 or your local emergency number.