



# 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. A heat alert is called when the combination of high heat, high humidity, and other conditions can be hazardous to your health.

### Are you at risk?

Hot weather can be a risk for people who:

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

### 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 or other vital organs. If you supervise children, be aware of the risks. 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, if you don't have air conditioning

at home.

- 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 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**

- Do not leave infants, children, or pets in a parked car.
- Limit the time your pet spends outdoors. Provide plenty of fresh water and leave the water in a shady area.

**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