

Hot Weather Safety



When the weather is hot, your body works overtime trying to stay cool. Excess heat escapes through protective mechanisms (such as perspiring), leading to uncomfortable and oftentimes harmful symptoms. Heat problems are preventable with the proper precautions. Be aware and enjoy the summer.

Symptoms of Heat-Induced Ailments

- Cramps - painful muscle contractions
- Dehydration – thirst, less frequent urination
- Edema – swelling of hands and feet
- Prickly heat bumps - irritating skin rash

Exhaustion / Fatigue – characterized by clammy skin, paleness, dizziness, nausea, fever, and headache

Symptoms of Heat Stroke

Seek immediate medical help if you or someone else develops the following symptoms. Heat Stroke is the most severe heat illness and is a life-threatening situation.

- Confusion, disorientation, agitation, irritability
- Convulsing, fainting, seizure, loss of consciousness
- High body temperature
- Intense muscle aches, fever, diarrhea or nausea
- Lethargy, sluggishness
- Rapid heart rate and breathing

HEAT STROKE IS A MEDICAL EMERGENCY – CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY

Caring for a Heat Stroke Victim Until Help Arrives

While you are waiting for help to arrive you can assist the person by doing the following:

- Elevate feet to direct blood flow back toward the head.
- Fan the person with a newspaper or towel to cool the body.
- Get the person out of the heat to a cooler environment. Take them indoors if possible.
- If available, apply icepacks to the groin area or armpits.
- Loosen or remove clothing and sprinkle the skin lightly with water.

Risk of Heat Related Illness

Some people are at greater risk than others to suffer heat-related illness:

- Infants and young children
- People aged 65 and older
- Those persons who are physically ill, or have heart disease or high blood pressure
- Those persons who must work in / wear protective equipment: helmets, respirators, heavy clothing

How to Beat the Heat – The Do's and Don'ts:

Do

- Check on older, sick, or frail people who may need help responding to the heat
- Consult your health care provider or pharmacist to see which medicines are affected by excessive heat conditions
- Eat light, cool, easy-to-digest foods such as fruit or salads
- Exercise moderately during cooler periods of the day such as the early morning or late evening hours
- Know the symptoms of excessive heat exposure and the appropriate responses.
- Minimize direct exposure to the sun and use sun-block
- Stay hydrated – regularly drink water or other nonalcoholic fluids
- Take a cool bath or shower
- Use air conditioners or spend time in air-conditioned locations such as malls and libraries
- Use portable electric fans to exhaust hot air from rooms or draw in cooler air
- Wear loose fitting, light-colored clothes

Don't

- Drink alcohol, or drinks that contain caffeine or large amounts of sugar to try to stay cool
- Eat heavy, hot, or hard-to-digest foods
- Exert yourself excessively
- Leave children, the elderly or pets alone in cars for any amount of time
- Wear heavy, dark clothing

Brought to you by the **West Paterson Volunteer Fire Department**

