

EXTREME HEAT

A heat wave is an extended period of extreme heat, and is often accompanied by high humidity. These conditions can be dangerous and even life-threatening for those who don't take the proper precautions.

Prepare Your Home, Yourself and Your Family

- ❖ Install window air conditioners snugly; insulate if necessary.
- ❖ Check air-conditioning ducts for proper insulation.
- ❖ Install temporary window reflectors (for use between windows and drapes), such as aluminum foil-covered cardboard, to reflect heat back outside.
- ❖ Weather-strip doors and sills to keep cool air in.
- ❖ Cover windows that receive morning or afternoon sun with drapes, shades, awnings or louvers. (Outdoor awnings or louvers can reduce the heat that enters a home by up to 80 percent.)
- ❖ Keep storm windows up all year.
- ❖ Conserve electricity:
 - ◆ During periods of extreme heat, people tend to use a lot more power for air conditioning, which can lead to a power shortage or outage. Stay indoors as much as possible. If air conditioning is not available, stay on the lowest floor out of the sunshine.
- ❖ Eat well-balanced, light meals
- ❖ Drink plenty of water regularly
- ❖ Limit intake of alcoholic beverages – Although beer and alcohol beverages appear to satisfy thirst, they actually cause further body dehydration.
- ❖ Dress in loose-fitting clothes that cover as much skin as possible.
 - ◆ Lightweight, light-colored clothing that reflects heat and sunlight and helps maintain normal body temperature.
 - ◆ Protect face and head by wearing a wide-brimmed hat.
- ❖ Avoid too much sunshine
 - ◆ Sunburn slows the skin's ability to cool itself. Use a sunscreen lotion with a high SPF (sun protection factor) rating.
 - ◆ Apply sunscreen at least 20 minutes before you go out into the sun
 - ◆ Reapply sunscreen at least every 2 hours. It may be necessary to reapply sunscreen more often if you have been swimming or doing other similar activities.

HEAT DISORDERS

Sunburn Symptoms: Skin redness and pain, possible swelling, blisters, fever & headaches.

First Aid: Take a shower, using soap, to remove oils that may block pores preventing the body from cooling naturally. If blisters occur, apply dry, sterile dressings and get medical attention.

Heat Cramps Symptoms: Painful spasms, usually in leg and abdominal muscles. Heavy sweating.

First Aid: Firm pressure on cramping muscles or gentle massage to relieve spasm. Give sips of water. If nausea occurs, discontinue.

Heat Exhaustion Symptoms: Heavy sweating, weakness, skin cold, pale and clammy. Weak pulse. Normal temperature possible. Fainting, vomiting.

First Aid: Get victim to lie down in a cool place. Loosen clothing. Apply cool, wet cloths. Fan or move victim to air-conditioned place. Give sips of water. If nausea occurs, discontinue. If vomiting occurs, seek immediate medical attention.

Heat Stroke (Sun Stroke) Symptoms: High body temperature (106+). Hot, dry skin. Rapid, strong pulse, Possible unconsciousness. Victim will likely not sweat.

First Aid: heat stroke is a severe medical emergency. Call 9-1-1 or emergency medical services, or get the victim to a hospital immediately; Delay can be fatal. Move victim to a cooler environment. Try a cool bath or sponging to reduce body temperature. Use extreme caution. Remove clothing; use fans and/or air conditioners. **DO NOT GIVE FLUIDS.**

Heat stroke is the most serious heat illness. It happens when the body cannot control its own temperature and its temperature rises rapidly. Sweating fails and the body cannot cool down. Body temperature may rise to 106°F or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency care is not given.

TO AVOID HEAT RELATED ILLNESSES, YOU SHOULD:

- ❖ Drink a glass of fluid every 15 to 20 minutes and at least one gallon each day.
 - ◆ Avoid alcohol and caffeine. They both dehydrate the body.
- ❖ Wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- ❖ When indoors without air conditioning, open windows if outdoor air quality permits and use fans.
- ❖ Take frequent cool showers or baths.
- ❖ If you feel dizzy, weak, or overheated, go to a cool place. Sit or lie down, drink water, and wash your face with cool water. If you do not feel better soon, get medical help quickly.

- ❖ Work during cooler hours of the day when possible, or distribute the workload evenly throughout the day.