

Emergency Shelter – Extreme Heat

Summer brings hot weather, and sometimes heat waves. Be careful on hot days, remember extremely hot days can be dangerous. Infants, young children, pregnant women, elderly and those with chronic illnesses do not tolerate heat well. They need extra attention, but everyone may be affected as the thermometer rises.

What to Know:

The Weather Service issues warnings about hot weather.

Excessive Heat Outlooks—Be Aware! An Outlook is issued when there may be an excessive heat event in the next 3-7 days.

Excessive Heat Watches—Be Prepared! Conditions are favorable for an excessive heat event to meet or exceed local Excessive Heat Warning criteria in the next 24 to 72 hours.

Heat Advisory—Take Action! Heat Index values are forecasting to meet locally defined advisory criteria for 1 to 2 days (daytime highs = 100-105° Fahrenheit). **Take precautions to avoid heat illness.**

Excessive Heat Warning—Take Action! Heat Index values are forecasting to meet or exceed locally defined warning criteria for at least 2 days (daytime highs = 105-110° Fahrenheit). **Take immediate precautions to avoid heat illness.** If you don't take precautions immediately when conditions are extreme, you may become seriously ill or even die.

What to Do:

- Check on infants, the elderly and sick, and anyone who doesn't have AC.
- Stay Hydrated. At work, take frequent breaks, stay hydrated. Watch each other. When outdoors limit strenuous activities, stay in the shade, avoid sun, stay hydrated.
- Never leave pets or children in a car for any length of time.
- If you don't have AC, fans, or a way to stay cool, go to a cooling shelter, or some place with AC.
- If you know someone without AC and you have AC, offer them shelter.

Hydration:

What to Drink: Water is best. Alcoholic beverages dehydrate. A lot of caffeine in drinks, such as energy drinks, can cause excess stress in heat. If you are sweating for several hours, sports drinks with balanced electrolytes may help stay hydrated.

Hydrate Before work or activities: Drink water today for activity tomorrow.

Hydrate During Work or activities: Drink before you are thirsty. If you are thirsty you are getting dehydrated. Drink 1 cup (8 oz) every 15 to 20 minutes. Do not drink more than 1 ½ Quarts (48 oz) per hour, which may cause a medical emergency. Salt tablets are not recommended, but do not skip meals.

Hydrate After Work: Replenish your body's water supply. This is important if you are out in the heat regularly.

Heat-Related Illnesses

Heat Cramps

Heat cramps may be the first sign of heat-related illness, and may lead to heat exhaustion or stroke

- **Symptoms:** Painful muscle cramps and spasms usually in legs and abdomen and Heavy sweating.
- **First Aid:** Apply firm pressure on cramping muscles or gently massage to relieve spasm. Give sips of water unless the person complains of nausea, then stop giving water.

Seek immediate medical attention if cramps last longer than 1 hour.

Heat Exhaustion

- **Symptoms:** Heavy sweating, Weakness or tiredness, cool, pale, clammy skin; fast, weak pulse, muscle cramps, dizziness, nausea or vomiting, headache, fainting,
- **First Aid:** Move person to a cooler environment, preferably a well air conditioned room. Loosen clothing. Apply cool, wet cloths or have person sit in a cool bath. Offer sips of water. If person vomits more than once,

Seek immediate medical attention if the person vomits, symptoms worsen or last longer than 1 hour

Heat Stroke

- **Symptoms:** Throbbing headache, confusion, nausea, dizziness, body temperature above 103°F, hot, red, dry or damp skin, rapid and strong pulse, fainting, loss of consciousness.
- **First Aid:** **Call 911 or get the victim to a hospital immediately.** Heat stroke is a severe medical emergency. Delay can be fatal. Move the victim to a cooler, preferably air-conditioned, environment. Reduce body temperature with cool cloths or bath. Use fan if heat index temperatures are below the high 90s. A fan can make you hotter at higher temperatures. Do **NOT** give fluids.

More information:

https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/pdf/Heat_Related_Illness.pdf

<https://www.weather.gov/safety/heat-illness>

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/mining/UserFiles/works/pdfs/2017-126.pdf>

Sources: Publication No. 2017-126, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institutes for Occupational Health and Safety