



## EXTREME HOT WEATHER

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Heat-related deaths and illness are preventable, yet annually many people succumb to extreme heat. Extreme heat caused 8,081 heat-related deaths in the US from 1999 to 2010. Getting too hot can make you sick. You can become ill from the heat if your body cannot compensate for it and properly cool you off.

The main things affecting your body's ability to cool itself during extremely hot weather are:

**High humidity.** When the humidity is high, sweat will not evaporate as quickly, which keeps your body from releasing heat as fast as it may need to.

**Personal factors.** Age, obesity, fever, dehydration, heart disease, mental illness, poor circulation, sunburn, and prescription drug and alcohol use can play a role in whether a person can cool off enough in very hot weather. Those people who are at highest risk include people 65 and older, children younger than two, and people who chronic diseases or mental illness.

People at greatest risk for heat-related illness can take the following protective actions to prevent illness or death:

**Stay in air-conditioned buildings as much as possible.** Contact your local health department or locate an air-conditioned shelter in your area. Air-conditioning is the number one protective factor against heat-related illness and death. If a home is not air-conditioned, people can reduce their risk for heat-related illness by spending time in public facilities that are air-conditioned and using air conditioning in vehicles.

Everyone should take these steps to prevent heat-related illnesses, injuries and deaths during hot weather:

- Do not rely on a fan as your primary cooling device during an extreme heat event.
- Do not use the stove or oven to cook. It will make you and your house hotter.

- Drink more water than usual and do not wait until you are thirsty to drink more. Muscle cramping may be an early sign of heat-related illness.
- Schedule your outdoor activities carefully. Limit outdoor activity, especially midday when the sun is hottest.
- Pace your activity. Start activities slow and pick up the pace gradually.
- Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing and sunscreen.
- Take cool showers or baths to cool down.
- Check on a friend or neighbor and have someone do the same for you.
- Seek medical care immediately if you or a friend or neighbor have symptoms of heat-related illness.
- Never leave children or pets in cars, even for short periods of time.
- Check on the local news for health and safety updates.

According to the CDC, heat-related illnesses are as follows:

<b>HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES</b>	
<b>WHAT TO LOOK FOR</b>	<b>WHAT TO DO</b>
<b>HEAT STROKE</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High body temperature (103 F or higher)</li> <li>• Hot, red, dry or damp skin</li> <li>• Fast, strong pulse</li> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Nausea</li> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Losing consciousness (passing out)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call 911 right away – heat stroke is a medical emergency.</li> <li>• Move the person to a cooler place.</li> <li>• Help lower the person’s temperature with cool cloths or a cool bath.</li> <li>• Do <b>NOT</b> give the person anything to drink.</li> </ul>
<b>HEAT EXHAUSTION</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy sweating</li> <li>• Cold, pale and clammy skin</li> <li>• Fast, weak pulse</li> <li>• Nausea or vomiting</li> <li>• Muscle cramps</li> <li>• Tiredness or weakness</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Fainting (passing out)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move to a cool place.</li> <li>• Loosen your clothes</li> <li>• Put cool, wet cloths on your body or take a cool bath.</li> <li>• Sip water.</li> <li>• <b>Get medical help right away if:</b></li> <li>• You are throwing up.</li> <li>• Your symptoms get worse.</li> <li>• Your symptoms last longer than one hour.</li> </ul>

<b>HEAT CRAMPS</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heavy sweating during intense exercise</li> <li>• Muscle pain or spasm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stop physical activity and move to a cool place.</li> <li>• Drink water or a sports drink.</li> <li>• Wait for cramps to go away before you do any more physical activity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Get medical help right away if:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cramps last longer than 1 hour.</li> <li>• You are on a low-sodium diet.</li> <li>• You have heat problems.</li> </ul>
<b>SUNBURN</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Painful, red, and warm skin</li> <li>• Blisters on the skin.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay out of the sun until your sunburn heals.</li> <li>• Put cool cloths on sunburned areas or take a cool bath.</li> <li>• Put moisturizing lotion on sunburned areas.</li> <li>• Do not break blisters.</li> </ul>
<b>HEAT RASH</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Red clusters of small blisters that look like pimples on the skin (usually on the neck, chest, groin or in elbow creases)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay in cool, dry place.</li> <li>• Keep the rash dry.</li> <li>• Use powder (like baby powder) to soothe the rash.</li> </ul>

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- CDC: <http://www.cdc.gov/extremeheat/>
- EPA: [http://www.epa.gov/naturaldisasters/ extremeheat.html](http://www.epa.gov/naturaldisasters/extremeheat.html)
- Ready.gov <https://www.ready.gov/heat>
- NOAA: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/> • American Red Cross: <http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/heat-wave>

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