



Extreme Hot Weather: Health Advice for the Public

There are lots of simple things you can do to protect yourself and others from the effects of too much heat and sun. If there is exceptionally hot weather:

✓ Stay out of the heat

- Try to stay indoors, especially between midday and 3pm
- Avoid strenuous outdoor activities such as sport, DIY or gardening. If this is not possible, do it during the cooler parts of the day
- Use sunscreens or sun blocks to help prevent sunburn
- Cover up with a t-shirt or other loose-fitting clothes
- Wear a hat to shade your head and sunglasses to protect your eyes

✓ Cool down

- Drink plenty of water, at least eight glasses a day. Avoid alcohol, tea and coffee as they can make you dehydrated
- Take a cool bath or shower, or splash your face with cold water to cool do

✓ Keep your environment cool

- Turn off non-essential lights and electrical equipment – they generate heat
- Keep indoor plants and bowls of water in the house - evaporation helps cool the air
- If possible, move into a cooler room, especially for sleeping
- Electric fans may provide some relief, but only use if necessary
- Remain in the coolest parts of the building as much as possible
- Keep rooms shaded and cool by closing blinds and curtains and opening windows

✓ Look out for others

- Keep an eye on isolated, elderly, ill or very young people and make sure they are able to keep cool
- Ensure that babies, children or elderly people are not left alone in stationary cars
- Check on elderly or sick neighbours, family or friends every day if possible
- Be alert and call a doctor or social services if someone is unwell or further help is needed

✓ If you have a health problem

- Keep medicines below 25°C or in the fridge (read the storage instructions on the packaging)
- Seek medical advice if you suffer from a chronic health condition/take multiple medications

✓ If you or others feel unwell

- Try to get help if you feel dizzy, weak, anxious or have intense thirst and headache
- Move to a cool place as soon as possible and measure your body temperature
- Drink some water or fruit juice to rehydrate
- Rest immediately in a cool place if you have painful muscular spasms (particularly in the legs, arms or stomach, in many cases after sustained exercise during very hot weather), and drink oral rehydration solutions containing electrolytes
- Medical attention is needed if heat cramps last more than one hour
- Consult your doctor if you feel unusual symptoms or if symptoms persist