



Surviving Summer Heat

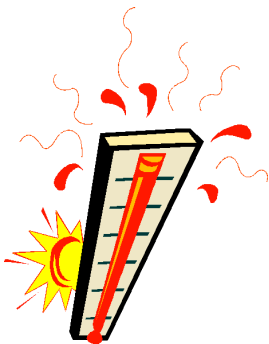
PREVENT HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES

Warm weather means activities and fun under the sun! Whether you love warm outdoors, or find it hot and sticky, everyone must be careful not to let a heat-related illness spoil the day.

The American Red Cross urges you to follow these tips to prevent a heat-related illness:

1. **NEVER leave children or pets alone in closed vehicles.** A closed vehicle can reach over 140 degrees F within minutes.
2. **Dress for the heat.** Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Light colors will reflect away some of the sun's energy.
3. **Drink water.** Carry water or juice with you and drink continuously even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid alcohol and caffeine, which dehydrate the body.
4. **Eat small meals and eat more often.** Avoid foods that are high in protein which increase metabolic heat. Avoid using salt tablets unless directed to do so by a physician.
5. **Slow down.** Avoid strenuous activity. If you must do strenuous activity, do it during the coolest part of the day, which is usually in the morning between 4:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m.
6. **Stay indoors when possible.** Air conditioning provides the safest escape from extreme heat: Install window air conditioners snugly. Check air-conditioning ducts for proper insulation. Vacuum filters weekly during periods of high use to provide more cool air.
7. **Take regular breaks when engaged in physical activity on warm days.** Take time out to find a cool place. If you recognize that you, or someone else, is showing the signals of a heat-related illness, stop activity and find a cool place. Remember, have fun, but stay cool!

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE HEAT INDEX



Based on the latest research findings, the National Weather Service (NWS) has devised the "Heat Index" (HI), (sometimes referred to as the "apparent temperature"). The HI, given in degrees F, is an accurate measure of how hot it really feels when relative humidity (RH) is added to the actual air temperature.

HEAT WAVE: A MAJOR SUMMER THREAT

In a normal year, about 175 Americans die as a result of summer heat. Among family of natural hazards, only the cold of winter-not lightning, hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, or earthquakes-takes a greater toll. In the 40-year period from 1936 through 1975, nearly 20,000 people were killed in the United States by the effects of heat and solar radiation.

HEAT DISORDERS: SYMPTOMS & FIRST AID

SUNBURN: Redness and pain. In severe cases swelling of skin, blisters, fever, headaches.

First Aid: Ointments for mild cases if blisters appear and do not break. If breaking occurs, apply dry sterile dressing. Serious, extensive cases should be seen by physician.

HEAT CRAMPS: Painful spasms usually in muscles of legs and abdomen possible.

Heavy sweating.

First Aid: Firm pressure on cramping muscles, or gentle massage to relieve spasm.

Give sips of water. If nausea occurs, discontinue use.

HEAT EXHAUSTION: Heavy sweating, weakness, skin cold, pale and clammy. Pulse thready. Fainting and vomiting.

First Aid: Get victim out of sun. Lay down and loosen clothing. Apply cool, wet cloths. Fan or move victim to air conditioned room. Sips of water. If nausea occurs, discontinue use. If vomiting continues, seek immediate medical attention.

HEAT STROKE (or sunstroke): High body temperature (106° F. or higher). Hot dry skin, no longer sweating. Rapid and strong pulse. Possible unconsciousness.

First Aid: HEAT STROKE IS A SEVERE MEDICAL EMERGENCY. SUMMON EMERGENCY MEDICAL ASSISTANCE OR GET THE VICTIM TO A HOSPITAL IMMEDIATELY. DELAY CAN BE FATAL. Move the victim to a cooler environment. Reduce body temperature with cold bath or sponging. Use extreme caution. Remove clothing, use fans and air conditioners. If temperature rises again, repeat process. Do not give fluids.



American
Red Cross

Source: American Red Cross and NOAA's National Weather Service



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