

Fact Sheet



Division of Developmental Disabilities Health Care Services

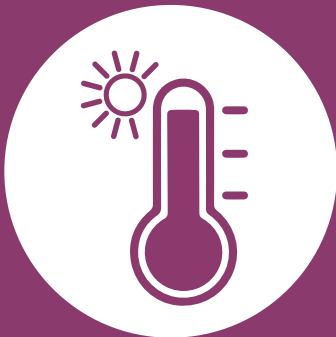
Heat Hazards Hot Topics

Health Information Fact Sheet

Summer temperatures are back! Hot weather can be life-threatening. Use common sense and caution to prevent a tragedy. Many activities that were appropriate in cooler weather can have deadly consequences during the hot weather months. *Heat Stroke, Heat Exhaustion, and Muscle Cramps* can be serious and possibly life-threatening. These conditions can occur when someone gets more hot weather than their body can handle.

Fact Sheet guidelines have been provided as general information, not as a substitution for medical treatment from a physician.

"Heat Hazards" is for general information only and is not a substitution for medical treatment from a physician.



In any heat-related illness emergency, call 9-1-1 immediately!

Avoid a Tragedy:

- *Never leave people or animals in a vehicle - not even for a second!* Temperatures inside a car can reach 130° F - 150° F within the first 5 -15 minutes - even if the outside temperature is only in the 80's!
- *Do a "head-count" when going to and returning from an activity.* Make sure everyone is on-board before leaving any location.
- *Do not stay in outside areas for more than 15-20 minutes at a time.* Use a timing device if necessary.
- *Drink plenty of fluids to keep hydrated.* Water is best! Avoid sweet drinks, caffeine, and alcohol. These further dehydrate the body.
- *Keep an ample supply of water available in vehicles.* Carry bottled water in all vehicles for yourself, your passengers, and for anyone who might be suffering from the heat.
- *Monitor fluid restrictions.* Call a member's doctor to adjust the amount needed during hot weather.
- *Wear appropriate clothing:* loose fitting, light colors, light fabrics, long sleeves, and a hat.
- *Avoid the midday sun.* Schedule outdoor activities before 10am. Be aware that 1:00pm in the summer is not the right time to walk to the convenience store.
- *Monitor members taking blood pressure, behavioral, anti-depression, and/or allergy medicines.* These medications decrease sweating and may compromise the body's cooling system.

Heat Stroke & Heat Exhaustion are Medical Emergencies:

Symptoms

- Muscle pain or spasms (early symptom)
- Flushed, hot, clammy skin
- Excessive or no sweating
- Weakness
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Confusion
- Fast, shallow breathing
- Fast heartbeat

Treatment

- Response time will be critical! Call 9-1-1 Emergency Services.
- Move to a cooler place.
- Cool down the person with cool water (shower or bath).
- If the person is conscious, offer cool fluids - not ice-cold fluids, which may cause stomach cramps.
- Do not wrap the person in wet towels - this may heat them up.
- CPR (Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation) may be needed if the person stops breathing or pulse cannot be detected.

The Heat Hazards Hot Topics Health Information Fact Sheet is in a series of *Health Information Fact Sheets* compiled by DDD Health Care Services. Issued Summer 2015; Reviewed/Revised April 2025.

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