



Department of Health
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Protecting Yourself From Extreme Heat

Clothing can help keep you cool. Wear clothing made of cotton if possible. Try to save strenuous activities for early morning or evening hours. If avoiding peak heating times is not possible, be sure to have shade available or an area to cool off. Make sure to schedule frequent breaks to avoid being overheated. and check the weather.

During the summer avoid peak hours of the day when possible (11:00a.m. – 4:00p.m.). Wear proper clothing to block UV rays and protect against extreme heat. Use sunglasses, hats, and sun block, whenever possible. When temperatures are high take frequent breaks, find shade and drink plenty of fluids. Remember to take the proper precautions to protect yourself. Always have an emergency plan in place and know how to use it.

There are three stages of heat disorders with the last being life threatening.

- Stage 1 – Heat Cramps are spasms of the muscles usually in the legs. Although not life-threatening, cramps are one of the early signs of dehydration and increased risk of more severe heat-related-illness. Treat with lots of fluids.
- Stage 2 – Heat Exhaustion. Some things to look for with heat exhaustion are cramps, fatigue, weakness, and feeling faint. A person who suffers heat exhaustion should be moved to a cool place and needs rest, lots of fluids and close monitoring. This person is at a much higher risk of developing heat stroke and should not return to strenuous activities for a couple days.
- Stage 3 – Heat Stroke. Heat Stroke is a life threatening condition that needs immediate medical attention. Call 911 immediately and begin cooling the victim as quickly as possible. Some signs of heat stroke are rapid heart rate, confusion, fatigue, nausea, temperature above 104°F, vomiting, stupor, and seizures. Treatment includes removing excess clothing, submerging in tub of ice water/cold water, spraying with hose or cold shower, and placing ice bags on armpits and groin area.

Staying hydrated is the key. Be sure to have plenty of fluids for people to drink. Make sure to drink water before heading out (water works best). Avoid drinks that contain caffeine or carbonation. These can increase a person, risk for dehydration. For very strenuous activities a sports drink may be needed (should only be used with strenuous activities lasting longer than 3 hours).

For more information, visit on-line at www.nyhealth.gov or call:

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