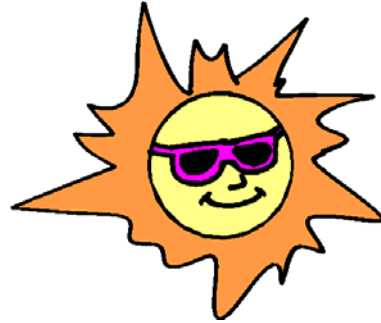




**American
Red Cross**

Greater Cleveland Chapter

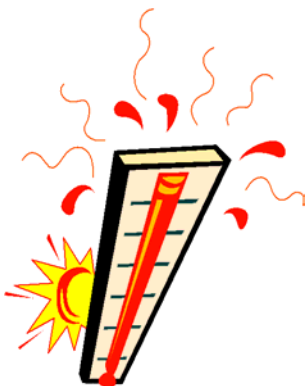


Are You Ready for a Heat Wave?

Here's what you can do to prepare yourself and your family

Anticipate extreme heat conditions

- ✓ Sweltering humidity – The stress on the body is increased when atmospheric conditions cause pollutants to be trapped near the ground.
- ✓ Excessively dry conditions – Strong winds and blowing dust can worsen the situation
- ✓ Rise in the Heat Index – Humidity and mugginess make the temperature seem hotter than it actually is. In high humidity, an 85-degree day may be perceived by the body as 95 degrees.



Check for Heat Alerts

Consult The Weather Channel or your local TV or radio station to see if an alert has been issued. There are two kinds of alerts:

- ✓ Heat Advisory – The heat is expected to become an inconvenience for much of the population and a problem for some.
- ✓ Excessive Heat Warning – The heat is expected to be dangerous for a large portion of the population.

Respond if Heat Alerts are issued

Inside:

- ✓ Get weather updates from The Weather Channel or your local TV or radio station.
- ✓ Stay indoors and avoid extreme temperature changes.
- ✓ If air conditioning is not available, stay on the lowest floor, out of the sunshine.



- ✓ Keep your electric fans running. Electric fans help sweat evaporate, which cools the body.
- ✓ Drink fluids often – particularly water or juice – even if you do not feel thirsty, to help your body's thermostat stay cool. Avoid alcoholic beverages, which dehydrate the body.
- ✓ Eat small, frequent meals. Avoid foods that are high in protein, which increase metabolic heat.
- ✓ Keep pets indoors and refill their water bowls frequently.

Outside:

- ✓ If you must go out, wear lightweight, light-colored clothing to reflect the sun's energy.
- ✓ Slow down. Avoid strenuous outdoor activity. If you must engage in strenuous activity, do it during the coolest part of the day, between 4 a.m. and 7 a.m.
- ✓ Cover all exposed skin with a high-SPF sunscreen, and wear a wide-brimmed hat to protect your face and head.
- ✓ Drink plenty of fluids.

After exposure:

- ✓ Continue drinking plenty of water and juice.
- ✓ Never take a cool shower immediately after becoming overheated. You may become cool too quickly and become ill, nauseous or dizzy.

Know the signals of heat emergencies

- ✓ Heat cramps – Muscle pains and spasms caused by heavy exertion, which trigger loss of water through heavy perspiration.
- ✓ Heat exhaustion – Cool, moist, pale or flushed skin. Heavy sweating, headache, nausea or vomiting, dizziness and exhaustion. Body temperature will be near normal.
- ✓ Heat stroke – Hot, red skin; changes in consciousness; rapid

weak pulse; and rapid, shallow breathing. Body temperature can be very high – as high as 105 degrees. If the person was sweating from heavy work or exercise, skin may be wet; otherwise, it will feel dry.

Know the treatments for heat emergencies

- ✓ Heat cramps – Get the person to a cooler place and have him or her rest in a comfortable position. Lightly stretch the affected muscle and replenish fluids. Give a half glass of cool water every 15 minutes.
- ✓ Heat exhaustion – Get the person out of the heat and into a cooler place. Remove or loosen tight clothing and apply cool, wet cloths, such as towels or sheets. If the person is conscious give cool water to drink. Be sure the person drinks slowly. Give half a glass of cool water every 15 minutes. Do not give liquids that contain alcohol or caffeine. Let the victim rest in a comfortable position, and watch carefully for changes in his or her condition.
- ✓ Heat stroke – Heat stroke is a life-threatening situation. Help is needed fast. Call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number. Move the person to a cooler place. Quickly cool the body. Immerse victim in a

cool bath or wrap wet sheets around the body and fan it. Watch for signals of breathing problems. Keep the person lying down and continue to cool the body any way you can. If the victim refuses water, vomits or there are changes in consciousness, do not give anything to eat or drink.



Your local contact is:
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