

# PREVENTING Heat-Related Illness

## TIPS for Individuals Taking Care of Infants and Children

### What are the symptoms of heat-related illness?

#### HEAT Exhaustion

- Heavy Sweating
- Weakness
- Cold, pale, clammy skin
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fainting

#### HEAT Stroke

- A very high temperature (above 103°F)
- Red, hot, and dry skin (may appear wet if person was sweating from heavy work or exercise)
- Rapid or strong pulse
- Possible unconsciousness

### Do I need to be concerned about hot temperatures?

**Yes!** When it gets hot outside, our bodies can be vulnerable to heat-related illnesses, such as heat exhaustion or heat stroke. During a period of abnormally and uncomfortable hot weather, such as days over 90 or 95 degrees, our bodies can become too hot and lose its ability to cool down. Children and infants are more susceptible to heat-related illnesses because their body is sensitive to high heat, and they rely on their caregiver to recognize symptoms.

### What's the difference between **heat exhaustion** and **heat stroke**?

**Heat exhaustion** is a milder form of heat-related illness, but it can easily turn into heat stroke. Heat exhaustion could happen when you are exposed to high temperatures for several days, without replacing your body's fluids and electrolytes.

A **heat stroke** could happen when your body becomes too hot and loses the ability to control its temperature. This can lead to more serious health issues, such as organ and brain damage. Heat stroke requires immediate medical attention.

### How do I protect infants and children on hot days?

- ☐ Make sure your kids drink more water than usual. Don't wait until they say they are thirsty.
- ☐ Add a little natural juice to the water. This might make it more appealing.
- ☐ Prepare light meals, and give your kids extra fruits and vegetables to help them stay hydrated.
- ☐ Schedule tasks for earlier or later in the day to avoid midday heat.
- ☐ Never leave children or infants in a parked car.
- ☐ Applying sunscreen as indicated on the package, can help protect your children. Encourage them to stay out of direct sunlight.
- ☐ Use air conditioning if you have it in your home, visit a splash pad in your area. Visit [www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/article/454927](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/article/454927) for locations.
- ☐ If you have to use a fan, don't set it up to blow directly on you or your children. Instead you should use it to create cross ventilation in your home.
- ☐ Spray or sponge your kids with cool water.
- ☐ Check local news for extreme heat alerts and safety tips.
- ☐ If symptoms of heat-related illness are recognized, seek medical attention immediately.

## Warning Signs:

*Heat  
Exhaustion*

vs.

**HEAT  
STROKE**

Heat-related illness is

***Preventable!***

Stay somewhere cool

Drink plenty of water

Avoid sugar, alcohol & caffeine

Wear light clothing

Paleness

Tiredness

Weakness

Dizziness

Headache

Fainting

Muscle cramps

Heavy sweating

Nausea or vomiting

Extremely high body  
temperature (103°F+)

Red, hot, dry skin  
(with no sweating)

Rapid, strong pulse

Throbbing headache

Dizziness

Nausea

Confusion

Unconsciousness

***Watch out!***

*If left untreated,  
heat exhaustion can  
progress to*



**STOP**

If you recognize symptoms  
of heat stroke, it is  
**LIFE THREATENING.**

Get the person somewhere  
cool and seek medical  
attention  
**IMMEDIATELY.**

Michelle L. Holshue, 2012

Data on heat-related illness via CDC:

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/>