

PREVENTING Heat-Related Illness

TIPS for Low Income Families and Individuals

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 the ability to cool down. Low income families and individuals are more sensitive to heat-related illnesses because they have limited financial resources and access to cooling centers.

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 myself on hot days?

- ☐ Drink more water than usual. Don't wait until you are thirsty.
- ☐ Eat more fruit, and light meals to help you stay hydrated.
- ☐ Try not to use your stove and oven.
- ☐ Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- ☐ Wearing and reapplying sunscreen as indicated on the package can help protect you. Avoid direct sunlight.
- ☐ If you have to use a fan, don't set it up to blow directly on you. Instead you should use it to create cross ventilation in your home.
- ☐ Use air conditioning if you have it in your home, visit a splash pad in your area. Visit www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/article/454927 for locations.
- ☐ Never leave infants or children in a parked car.
- ☐ Check local news for extreme heat alerts and safety tips.
- ☐ Buddy up! Identifying heat related illness may be difficult. You may need medical attention but not know it, so check in with a friend or neighbor, and have them do the same for you. If symptoms 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**.

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Data on heat-related illness via CDC:

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