

Hot Weather Safety Tips

keeping your family cool around the house

It's that time of year when the temperature is rising. We need to take special precautions to safeguard the well-being of ourselves, and our families. Heat-related deaths in the United States exceed 600 per year and this figure is expected to rise, according to the CDC. Here are some things to remember this summer as the children play outside and as we work outside around the house.

DOs and DON'Ts to avoid overheating

Do: Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.

Do: Protect yourself from the sun by wearing a wide-brimmed hat (also keeps you cooler) and sunglasses and by putting on sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher (the most effective products say "broad spectrum" or "UVA/UVB protection" on their labels).

Do: Drink more fluids (nonalcoholic, non-caffeine) regardless of your activity level. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. Warning: If your doctor generally limits the amount of fluid you drink or has you on water pills, ask how much you should drink while the weather is hot.

Don't: Drink liquids that contain alcohol or large amounts of sugar—these actually cause you to lose more body fluid. Also, avoid very cold drinks, because they can cause stomach cramps.

FAST FACT: According to the CDC, heat-related deaths in the United States exceed 600 per year.

Signs of overheating

- Disorientation, agitation or confusion
- Dizziness
- Hallucinations
- Headache
- High body temperature
- Hot, dry skin that is flushed but not sweaty
- Loss of consciousness
- Seizure
- Sluggishness or fatigue
- Rapid heart beat

If overheating does occur, it is important for the person to be treated immediately as heat stroke can cause permanent damage and even death. Here are some immediate first aid measures you can take while waiting for help to arrive:

- Get the person indoors.
- Remove extra clothing and gently apply cool water to the skin, followed by fanning to stimulate sweating.
- Apply ice packs to the groin and armpits.
- Have the person lie down in a cool area with their feet slightly elevated.

Intravenous fluids are often necessary to compensate for fluid or electrolyte loss. Bed rest is generally advised and body temperature may fluctuate abnormally for weeks after heat stroke.

We found much of this helpful information at the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) online. You can learn more at www.usinspect.com/cdc-heat.

