

Heat Safety Guidance for Caregivers

April 2025

This guidance is for caregivers to support heat safety for friends, family or clients. Older adults, people with disabilities and people managing chronic health conditions are at high risk for heat illnesses, especially if they do not have access to air conditioning at home and have self-care limitations.

You can support high-risk individuals by making them aware of their risks and how to stay cool. **It's important to check in on care recipients and provide extra assistance as needed during periods of hot weather.** Use the action plan on page 4 to document strategies for preventing or responding to heat illnesses.

If you need help accessing or understanding this information, contact ClimateHealth@vermont.gov.

Temperature guidance

	Indoors	Outdoors
Generally safe	65 - 78°F	below 80°F
Increased risk	79 - 87°F	80 - 89°F
Significant risk	88°F or above	90°F or above

	Body temperature
Normal	95 - 99°F
Elevated	100 - 103°F
Heat stroke	104°F or above

Keep their home cool



Try to keep indoor temperatures between 65 - 78°F. Higher temperatures increase the risk for heat illnesses, especially at or above 88°F indoors.

- Use air conditioning if possible.
- Close windows and window shades during the day to keep out the sun.
- Open windows at night, or when it is cooler outside than inside (unless outdoor air quality is bad). Open the shades at night to release heat.
- When windows are open, use fans to bring cool air in and to vent warm air out.
- Limit the use of hot appliances like the stove or oven.
- Use a dehumidifier to keep indoor humidity below 60%.
- Consider using indoor temperature sensors that automatically alert you and your care recipient to dangerously hot temperatures.



HealthVermont.gov/Hot-Weather
802-863-7220



Keep care recipients cool



Make sure care recipients do the following in hot weather:

- Stay in air-conditioning or the coolest part of their home.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored and loose-fitting clothing.
- Take cool showers or use cold or wet towels to cool off.
- Eat cold or room temperature food.
- Use fans, but do not rely on them as the only way to stay cool.

Support good hydration



Encourage care recipients to:

- Drink at least 6-8 glasses of water each day and more if they are physically active.
- Drink water throughout the day, not just when they are thirsty.
- Avoid drinking alcoholic and caffeinated beverages.

Stay safe outdoors



Support outdoor safety for care recipients:

- Limit time and intensity of physical activity to the coolest parts of the day.
- Stay in shade if possible. Use sunscreen and wear sun protection as needed.
- Rest and hydrate in a cool place if they start to feel faint, weak or nauseous.
- Call for help if their symptoms don't quickly resolve.
- People with chronic health conditions should take extra precautions.

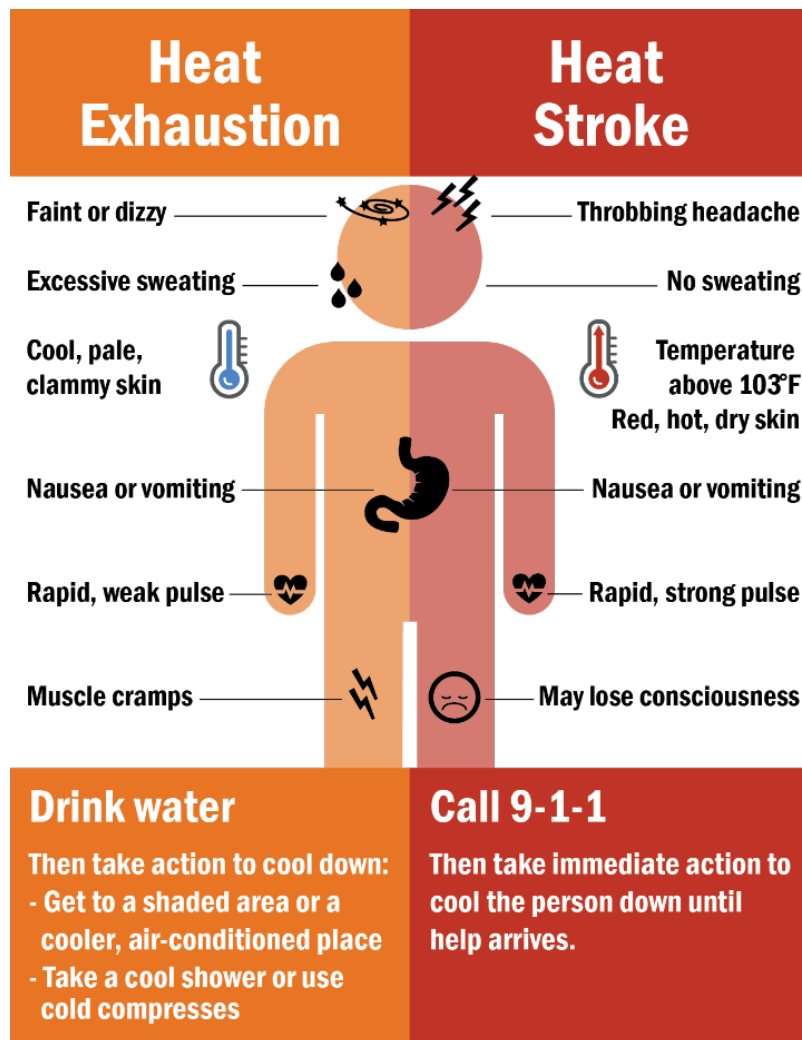
Stay informed and aware



- Share [heat safety tips](#).
- Follow [weather forecasts](#) and sign up for weather alerts at [VTAlert.gov](https://vtalert.gov).
- Stay in touch with care recipients before and during periods of hot weather to raise awareness and provide support.

Resources

Know the signs and symptoms of heat illnesses



Who is at highest risk?

- Adults aged 65 and older
- People with disabilities
- People with chronic medical conditions (like heart disease or diabetes)
- People taking [certain medications](#)
- People without access to air conditioning
- People living alone
- People who are physically active outdoors

If you need assistance

- If a care recipient's home cannot be kept at a safe temperature, locate and support transportation to a [nearby cooling site](#).
- Call 2-1-1 for non-emergency assistance.
- Call 9-1-1 in the event of a medical emergency.

Individual heat action plan

This heat action plan is designed for caregivers to support health and safety strategies for care recipients during hot weather. Consult with the care recipient's health care provider, family and/or other caregivers to inform actions. Some examples are provided in italics and should be replaced with information for each care recipient. **Keep a current copy of this plan at the care recipient's home and with primary caregivers.**

Care recipient name

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Caregiver and emergency contact info

Name	Organization or relationship to care recipient	Contact info	Role
	<i>Caregiving organization</i>		<i>Wellness checks, other support as-needed</i>
	<i>Family</i>		<i>Consultation for caregiving strategies</i>
	<i>Friend/neighbor</i>		<i>Emergency transportation</i>
	<i>Health care provider</i>		<i>Consultation for medical questions</i>

Care recipient's health conditions or sensitivities affected by heat

Condition	Typical impacts during hot weather

Care recipient's medications affected by heat

Medication name	Modifications for use during hot weather (only as directed by care recipient's health care provider)

On days when the outdoor temperature will be at least ____ ° F:

Caregivers will follow this wellness check plan:

Action	Who will do it	When
Call care recipient	Caregiving organization	9am and 3pm
Visit to home	Friend/neighbor	12pm and 6pm

These strategies should be used to keep the care recipient safe at home:

Strategy	Who will do it
Keep blinds closed	Care recipient
Drink water every 30 minutes	Care recipient
Provide cool meals for the day	Caregiving organization
Provide a cool bath or cool/wet towels if needed	Caregiving organization

If indoor temperature is above ____ ° F and is not expected to cool off soon:

Action	Who will do it
Notify family	Caregiving organization
Transport care recipient to cooling center	Friend/neighbor

Nearby [public cooling centers](#) or other locations where care recipient can go to for relief (consider private homes, hotels, etc.)

Location name	Operating hours	Address	Contact info

Can care recipient transport themselves? (circle one) Yes No

If no, how will care recipient be transported to cooling location:

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