



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



Keep Your Cool in the Summer's Heat



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BURLINGTON – The next three days are forecast to hover near or above 90 degrees. During summer's extreme heat, know how to recognize risk factors, respond to warning signs, and what precautions to take to stay safe.

Nationwide, extreme heat events, or heat waves, are the most common cause of weather-related deaths. They cause more deaths each year than hurricanes, lightning, tornadoes, floods and earthquakes combined.

"Heat illness is a real danger for everyone. Vermonters go to the emergency department for heat illnesses just as often as people in Maryland," said Lori Cragin, state epidemiologist for environmental health. "Stay cool, stay hydrated and stay informed."

Older people (age 65+), infants and children and people with chronic medical conditions are more prone to heat stress.



Keep Your Cool:

- Slow down and avoid strenuous activity. Don't try to do too much on a hot day.
- Wear lightweight, loose-fitting, light-colored clothing. Light colors will reflect heat and sunlight, helping to maintain normal body temperature. Protect your face with a wide-brimmed hat.
- Drink plenty of water regularly and often, even if you don't feel thirsty. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. Cut down or cut out caffeine, alcohol, or sugary drinks.
- Stay indoors as much as possible.
- If you don't have air conditioning, stay on your lowest floor, out of the sun. Electric fans do not cool the air, but they do help evaporate sweat, which cools your body. When the temperature is in the high 90s, fans will not prevent heat-related illness. Taking a cool shower or bath, swimming or moving to an air-conditioned place is a much better way to cool off.
- Places where you can get relief from the heat are air conditioned schools, libraries, theaters, shopping malls, and other community facilities that may offer refuge during the warmest times of the day.
- Cover windows that get morning or afternoon sun with drapes, shades, awnings or louvers. Outdoor awnings or louvers can reduce the heat that enters a home by up to 80 percent.
- Avoid too much sunshine. Sunburn slows the skin's ability to cool itself. If you are outside, use sunscreen lotion with a high SPF (Sun Protection Factor) rating.
- Never leave children or pets alone in a closed or parked vehicle.

Check on family, friends and neighbors. Visit older adults at least twice a day, such as anyone over the age 65 and over, people who have mental illness, and people with health conditions such as heart disease or high blood pressure, and closely watch them for signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Infants and young children, of course, need much more frequent watching.

[Learn more: Extreme Heat](#)

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