

TIPS ON BATTLING THE HEAT ON DAYS 90 DEGREEES F OR ABOVE

Older adults, infants, and people with chronic illnesses are most vulnerable.

1. **Stay out of the sun.** Avoid going outside during the hottest part of the day, noon to 4 p.m.
2. **Limit your activity.** Reserve vigorous exercise or activities for early morning or evening.
3. **Dress properly.** Wear a large-brimmed hat and light-colored, light-weight, loose-fitting clothing that breathes. Don't go shirtless--a sweaty shirt will keep you cooler than bare skin.
4. **Drink plenty of liquids.** Fluids help you sweat, which is your body's way of cooling off. Drink lots of water, juice or sports drinks. Avoid alcoholic or caffeinated drinks that promote fluid loss through urination.
5. **Avoid hot, heavy meals.** They increase your metabolism, causing an increase in your body temperature.
6. **Keep it cool.** Set your air conditioner between 75 and 80 degrees F. If you don't have an air conditioner, take a cool bath or shower once or twice a day and visit air-conditioned public places.
7. **Heat Cramps.** Heat cramps are painful spasms of muscles along with profuse perspiration, and occur most often during exercise in high temperatures. The muscles most affected are usually the ones you are using during your exercise or your abdominal muscles. You can usually resolve the symptoms by resting and drinking water mixed with a teaspoon of salt per quart.
8. **Sunburn** Prolonged exposure to the sun's ultraviolet rays produces red, tender, swollen skin that may develop water blisters. Severe cases of sun and heat exposure can result in more serious consequences needing emergency care. Sunburn happens relatively slowly, but can be treated adequately at home with a cool bath or shower followed by the application of hydrocortisone cream several times a day. Do not break the water blisters, but if they break on their own, remove the skin fragments and use an antibacterial ointment on the open areas. Dress them with clean gauze. Taking aspirin several times daily will help alleviate the general discomfort and may reduce swelling.
9. **Heat Stroke.** The main indication of heat stroke is a fever of 105 degrees Fahrenheit with hot, dry skin. Other signs include rapid heartbeat, rapid and shallow breathing, either elevated or lowered blood pressure, and confusion or unconsciousness. If you suspect heat stroke, get the person out of the sun and

into a cool spot. Cool the person by covering him or her with damp sheets or spraying with water. Direct air onto the person with a fan or a newspaper, and monitor the person's temperature with a thermometer. Stop cooling the person when his or her temperature returns to normal. If breathing ceases, start mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Heat stroke is an emergency that needs immediate medical attention.

10. Heat Exhaustion. Heat exhaustion occurs when your heart and vascular system do not respond properly to high temperatures. The symptoms of heat exhaustion resemble shock and include faintness, rapid heartbeat, low blood pressure, an ashen appearance, cold clammy skin, and nausea. If you suspect heat exhaustion, get the person out of the sun and into a cool spot. Lay the person down and elevate his or her feet slightly. Loosen or remove most or all of the person's clothing. Give the person cold (not iced) water to drink, with a teaspoon of salt added per quart.

11. Heat Rash. To prevent heat rash, also known as prickly heat, use an air conditioner or fan and dress lightly, preferable in clothing made from pure cotton. Cotton allows sweat to evaporate more easily than most synthetic fibers. If you do get heat rash, taking frequent baths in lukewarm water can help relieve symptoms. Calamine lotion may also help.

12. Pregnant Women. Pregnant women have a harder time cooling off in extreme heat. Their bodies are circulating more blood to feed the fetus and they often feel hot, already, because of the extra fat layers on their body. Although pregnant women sweat more, which normally promotes cooling, they need to make sure to drink plenty of liquids to prevent dehydration.