



SENIOR HEALTH

Heat-Related Dangers

BEWARE OF EXTREMES

As you get older, it becomes harder for your body to respond to extreme temperatures. Some medications, such as diuretics and high blood pressure medicine, can make you even more susceptible to heat. People who have heart, lung or kidney disease are also especially at risk during hot weather. Utility costs can also make it difficult for some seniors to properly cool their homes.

HEAT EXHAUSTION

Overexposure to heat can result in loss of body water and salt, causing heat exhaustion.

Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion

- weakness
- heavy sweating
- nausea
- giddiness
- dizziness
- collapse
- fatigue
- cool, clammy, red or flushed skin

Treatment

- Rest in bed away from the heat.
- Drink cool liquids.
- Sponge or immerse yourself in cool water.

HEATSTROKE

This is a life-threatening condition that occurs when the body becomes dangerously overheated. Heatstroke can develop when heat exhaustion is left untreated.

Symptoms of Heatstroke

- faintness
- headache
- loss of consciousness
- body temperature at or above 104° F
- rapid pulse
- hot, dry skin and no sweating
- other symptoms of heat exhaustion

Treatment

- Heatstroke is an emergency condition and victims should be treated by a doctor immediately.

HOT WEATHER TIPS

- Stay out of direct sunlight.
- Stay in an air-conditioned room, such as a library or movie theater.
- Take cool baths or showers.
- Place ice bags or wet towels on your body and sit or lie near a fan.
- Avoid strenuous activity.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing made of natural fibers.
- Drink plenty of fluids, such as water, vegetable juices and iced tea.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages or drinks with a high salt content.