



Extreme Heat Precautions and Safety Tips

Categories : [Disability Related Services](#), [Disaster Related](#), [Health Issues](#)

If you are exposed to high temperatures and humidity for too long, you sweat heavily, and don't drink enough fluids, your natural cooling system may fail. The result may be a heat-related illness.

Heat-related illnesses include:

Heat Cramps:

Heat cramps are muscle pains or spasms-usually in the abdomen, arms, or legs-that may occur in association with strenuous activity. Heat cramps may also be a symptom of heat exhaustion. If you have heart problems or are on a low-sodium diet, seek medical attention for heat cramps.

Heat Exhaustion:

Heat exhaustion is a milder form of heart-related illness that can develop after several days of exposure to high temperatures and inadequate or unbalanced replacement of fluids. Elderly people and those with high blood pressure, and those working or exercising in a hot environment are most prone to heat exhaustion.

Heat stroke:

Heat stroke is the most serious-heart related illness. It occurs when the body becomes unable to control its temperature: the body's temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails, and the body is unable to cool down. Body temperature may rise to 106 degrees or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not provided.

For more information go to the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention: Extreme Heat,
<http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/>

The Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection offer the following tips during extreme high temperatures:

- Slow down, and avoid strenuous activity.
- Wear lightweight, loose-fitting, light-colored clothing. Light colors will reflect heat and sunlight and help 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.
- Limit intake of alcoholic beverages. They can actually dehydrate your body.
- Eat well-balanced, light, regular meals.
- Stay indoors as much as possible.
- If you do not 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.
- Go to a place where you can get relief from the heat, such as 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 with a high SPF (Sun Protection Factor) rating.
- Never leave children or pets alone in a closed vehicle.
- Do not leave pets outside for extended periods. Make sure pets have plenty of drinking water.



- Check on family, friends, and neighbors regularly.

Additional Resources:

- FEMA – [Extreme Heat: http://www.ready.gov/heat](http://www.ready.gov/heat)
- Connecticut Department of Public Health, Heat Safety Precautions
– <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Communications/Crisis-and-Emergency-Risk-Communication/Extreme-Heat>

If a city/town has opened a designated cooling center, we will list the site location and hours on our website at the following link. If we do not have any listings available, please note that city/town libraries, senior centers and other public locations are good places to cool off.

- Click [HERE](#) for more information

For information about air quality issues:

- Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Pollution (DEEP)
Search by service term: [Pollution Control](#)

PREPARED BY: 211/mm
CONTENT LAST REVIEWED: April 2019