

Tips to Avoid Heat-Related Health Problems

(KLZA)-- Dangerously hot weather is predicted for the listening area, and the American Red Cross reminds everyone of the steps they should take to stay safe when the temperatures rise.

Never leave children or pets alone in enclosed vehicles.

Slow down, stay indoors and avoid strenuous exercise during the hottest part of the day.

Take frequent breaks if working outdoors.

Use a buddy system when working in excessive heat.

Check on family, friends and neighbors who do not have air conditioning, who spend much of their time alone or who are more likely to be affected by the heat.

Check on animals frequently to ensure that they are not suffering from the heat. Ensure they have water and a shady place to rest.

Eat small meals and eat more often.

Avoid extreme temperature changes.

Wear loose-fitting, lightweight, light-colored clothing.

Excessive heat can lead to sunburn, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. To help avoid problems, stay hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids and limit drinks with caffeine or alcohol.

If someone is experiencing heat cramps in the legs or abdomen, get them to a cooler place, have them rest, lightly stretch the affected muscle and replenish their fluids with a half a glass (about 4 ounces) of cool water every 15 minutes.

If a person is exhibiting signs of heat exhaustion (cool, moist, pale or flushed skin, heavy sweating, headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness exhaustion), move them to a cooler place, remove or loosen tight clothing and spray the person with water or apply cool, wet cloths or towels to the skin. Fan the person. If they are conscious, give small amounts of cool water to drink. Make sure the person drinks slowly. Watch for changes in condition. If the person refuses water, vomits or begins to lose consciousness, call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number.

HEAT STROKE IS LIFE-THREATENING. Signs include hot, red skin which may be dry or moist; changes in consciousness; vomiting; and high body temperature. Call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number immediately if someone shows signs of heat stroke. Move the person to a cooler place. Quickly cool the person's body by immersing them up to their neck in cold water if possible. Otherwise, douse or spray the person with cold water, or cover the person with cold, wet towels or bags of ice.

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