

Top 10 Ways to Prevent Heat Illness

Heat-related illnesses, such as heat exhaustion or heat stroke, occur when the body is unable to properly cool itself, potentially causing damage to the brain and vital organs. Here are some tips to prevent this from happening on hot days.

1. **Drink Cool Water** – Drink cool water even if you are not thirsty. Aim for at least 1 cup every 20 minutes.
2. **Replace Salts and Minerals** – Heavy sweating removes salt and minerals from the body that need to be replaced. A sports drink can replace the salt and minerals you lose in sweat.
Note: If you are on a low-salt diet, have diabetes, high blood pressure, or other chronic conditions, talk with your doctor before drinking a sports beverage or taking salt tablets.
3. **Stay Away from Very Sugary or Alcoholic Drinks** – These cause you to lose more body fluid.
4. **Take Rest Breaks** – Allow yourself enough time to recover from the heat, considering the temperature, humidity, and conditions. Apps that provide a real-time heat index and hourly forecasts specific to your location can be used to monitor heat and ensure you take a break when the conditions become too hot for work.
5. **Find Shade or a Cool Area** – Take breaks in a designated shady or cool location like in an air-conditioned vehicle or under a dense, leafy tree.
6. **Avoid Hot and Heavy Meals** – They add heat to your body!
7. **Dress for the Heat** – Wear a hat and light-colored, loose-fitting, and breathable clothing if possible.
8. **Wear Sunscreen** – Sunburn affects your body's ability to cool down and can make you dehydrated. Protect yourself from the sun by putting on sunscreen of SPF 30 or higher 30 minutes before going out. Continue to reapply it throughout the day.
9. **Know the Signs** – Learn the signs and symptoms of heat-related illnesses which can include confusion, paleness, dizziness, chills, headaches, fainting, and even loss of consciousness.
10. **Watch Out for Each Other** – Use a buddy system to monitor yourself and others for signs of heat illness. If you're 65 years of age or older, have a friend or relative call or check on you twice a day during a heat wave.



These are all the basics to help you protect yourself from the heat.