

Published on *SeniorNavigator* (<https://seniornavigator.org>)

Extreme Heat and Your Health

Heat related deaths and illnesses are preventable. Despite this fact, approximately 1,220 people in the United States are killed by extreme heat every year.

What is extreme heat?

Spotlight --- Enter your zip code to get the [HeatRisk](#) for this week and find actions you can take to keep you and your family safe. Healthcare professionals, learn how to support patients with heat information [here](#).

Take steps to protect yourself from extreme heat.

Extreme heat is defined as summertime temperatures that are much hotter and/or humid than average. Because some places are hotter than others, this depends on what's considered average for a particular location at that time of year. Humid and muggy conditions can make it seem hotter than it really is.

Health effects

Know the signs and symptoms of heat-related illnesses.

Heat-related illnesses, like heat exhaustion or heat stroke, happen when the body is not able to properly cool itself. While the body normally cools itself by sweating, during extreme heat, this might not be enough. In these cases, a person's body temperature rises faster than it can cool itself down. This can cause damage to the brain and other vital organs.

Some factors that might increase your risk of developing a heat-related illness include:

- High levels of humidity

- Obesity
- Fever
- Dehydration
- Prescription drug use
- Heart disease
- Mental illness
- Poor circulation
- Sunburn
- Alcohol use

Beat the Heat: Extreme Heat Infographic

Image



BEAT THE HEAT: Extreme Heat

Heat-related deaths are preventable

WHAT:

Extreme heat or heat waves occur when the temperature reaches extremely high levels or when the combination of heat and humidity causes the air to become oppressive.



Children

WHO:

More males than females are affected



Older adults



Outside workers



People with disabilities

WHERE:



Houses with little to no AC



Construction worksites



Cars

HOW to AVOID:



Stay hydrated with water, avoid sugary beverages



Stay cool in an air conditioned area



Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothes



During extreme heat the temperature in your car could be deadly!

Outside Temperature 80°



Time Elapsed: 20 minutes



Time Elapsed: 40 minutes



Time Elapsed: 60 minutes

Download Infographic

- [English](#)
- [Simplified Chinese](#)
- [Vietnamese](#)

Learn more:

- [Symptoms of Heat-Related Illnesses](#)

Who is at increased risk

Know what factors can make you more likely to get sick from extreme heat.

Older adults, the very young, and people with mental illness and chronic diseases are at highest risk. However, even young and healthy people can be affected if they participate in strenuous physical activities during hot weather.

Summertime activity, whether on the playing field or the construction site, must be balanced with actions that help the body cool itself to prevent heat-related illness. Use this website to learn more on how to stay safe in the heat this summer, including how to prevent, recognize, and cope with heat-related illness.

Learn more:

- [Heat and Older Adults \(Aged 65+\)](#)
- [Heat and Infants and Children](#)
- [Heat and Chronic Conditions](#)
- [Heat and People without Air Conditioning](#)
- [Heat and Athletes](#)
- [Heat and Outdoor Workers](#)
- [Heat and Pregnancy](#)

Tips to stay safe

Protect yourself and others when it's hot outside by staying cool, staying hydrated, and staying informed. Learn additional tips for staying safe during extreme heat.

Learn more:

- [Preventing Heat-Related Illness](#)
- [Pets and Extreme Heat](#)

Resources

- [Natural Disasters and Severe Weather](#)
- [HEAT.gov - National Integrated Heat Health Information System](#)
- [Extreme Heat | Ready.gov](#)
- [Extreme Heat Safety | Heat Exhaustion Safety | Red Cross](#)
- [Heat Safety Tips and Resources \(weather.gov\)](#)
- [Climate Change- Extreme Heat](#)
- [Heat Stress Illness](#)
- [Search Heat Stress Illness Data](#)
- [Temperature Extremes- Climate and Health](#)

>> **Learn all about [Virginia's new law that protects Virginian's against utility shut-offs during extreme heat](#).**

Article Source

Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

Source URL

<https://www.cdc.gov>

Last Reviewed

Tuesday, July 2, 2024