



PROTECTING ELDERS FROM HEAT STROKE



Elders are at elevated risk of harm from heat.
Learn the signs to keep your family members safe.

INCREASED RISK



Older adults are more susceptible to heat extremes.

Their bodies are less efficient in cooling, they are more likely to suffer from chronic medical conditions, take medications that interfere with cooling, and are more likely to be isolated, making responding to heat more difficult.

HEAT EXHAUSTION

Warning signs:

- Thirst/dehydration
- Irritable or grouchy
- Dizziness
- Lack coordination
- Unusual fatigue/tiredness
- Nausea and vomiting
- Stomach cramps
- Increased sweating or
- Cold clammy skin
- Muscle cramps
- Unusual ankle/leg edema
- minimal urination, dark smelly urine



**HEAT EXHAUSTION CAN PROGRESS TO
SERIOUS HEATSTROKE QUICKLY IN ELDERS.
THIS IS A MEDICAL EMERGENCY.**

HEAT STROKE



- Fainting or becoming unconscious
- A change in behavior—confusion, agitation, staggering, or acting strangely
- Body temperature over 104°F (40°C)
- Dry, flushed skin
- A strong, rapid pulse or a slow, weak pulse
- Not sweating, even if it is hot

PREVENTION is the best approach

- Use air conditioning in cars and the home
- If home has no AC or is overheated, go to cooling centers, libraries malls, or other places with air conditioning
- Keep hydrated, encourage lots of fluids (don't wait until thirsty to drink!)
- Stay in shady areas if outside
- Avoid direct sun exposure
- Dress in light, cotton clothing
- Take cool showers or baths to cool down

REFERENCES

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Tips for Preventing Heat-Related Illness. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/heattips.html>.
- Hot weather safety for older adults. (n.d.). National Institute on Aging. <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/hot-weather-safety-older-adults>
- Heat stress in older adults | Natural disasters and severe weather | CDC. (2020, April 15). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/older-adults-heat.html>