

Healthy News – Extreme Heat

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PROMOTE Extreme heat is more than a hot day. High temperatures and high humidity can make it hard for the body to cool down. When that happens, people can get sick quickly from heat exhaustion, heat stroke, or other heat-related illness.

Some people are more likely to be affected by heat, including older adults, young children, people with health conditions, people who work outside, people who live alone, and people without reliable air conditioning.

PREVENT Heat illness can often be prevented with a few simple steps.

Drink plenty of water. Take breaks. Spend time in shade or air conditioning.

Wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing. Try to schedule outdoor work, exercise, or activities during the cooler parts of the day. Check on family, friends, and neighbors during extreme heat, especially older adults or people who live alone. If you know someone age 65 or older, check on them at least twice a day during dangerous heat.

Never leave children, older adults, or pets in a parked vehicle. Even with the windows cracked, the temperature inside a vehicle can rise quickly and become dangerous.

PROTECT Watch for signs of heat illness, including:

- Heavy sweating
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Weakness
- Confusion
- Fainting
- Hot, dry skin

If someone is confused, passes out, stops acting right, or appears seriously ill from heat, call 911.

Protect pets, too. Make sure they have plenty of water and shade. Test sidewalks with your hand before walking pets. If it is too hot for your hand, it is too hot for their paws.

During extreme heat, find a cool place. Shade, fans, air conditioning, and public buildings can help people get relief from the heat.

Questions: Talk to a healthcare provider or contact South Heartland District Health Department, 606 Minnesota Ave, Hastings, NE, 402-462-6211.

Sources: <https://www.weather.gov/ama/heatindex>
<https://cdc.gov/heat-health/hcp/clinical-overview/index.html>

