



Safety Tips And Cool Ideas

Help Our Seniors Stay Cool and Healthy This Summer!

FACT SHEET: The Heat And The Elderly-A Deadly Mix

- Approximately 371 deaths occur in the United States every year due to heat stroke. Many other deaths occur from other causes as a result of high temperatures. Nearly half of all victims are 65 years and older.
- Prolonged heat exposure takes a toll on the body, compromising the ability to cool itself. Older adults are most susceptible to this due to the aging process-an older body is less efficient in reacting to the heat.
- Due to the energy crisis, there is a greater danger for heat-related illnesses among the elderly as rolling blackouts hit households throughout the state.
- Skyrocketing energy costs most fiercely affect seniors with monthly incomes less than \$1,000.
- Due to budget constraints, and in effort to cut utility costs, seniors are less likely to use air conditioners, thus increasing the risk for heatstroke.
- Although hot weather places everyone in danger, factors that increase the risk for heat-related illness include:
 - advanced age
 - isolation or social circumstances
 - heart, lung, or kidney disease
 - medication
 - high blood pressure or diabetes
 - high level apartment living
 - long term residency care
- ALL heat-related illnesses are PREVENTABLE!!!
- **YOU can make a difference!**





DANGER SIGNS : **How to SPOT when you're TOO HOT!**

- After prolonged heat exposure, consult a doctor as these symptoms could indicate a heat-related illness:

Headache
Nausea
Vomiting

- **HEAT EXHAUSTION** occurs when the body gets too hot; Symptoms include:
- thirst
weakness
dizziness
profuse sweating
cold and clammy skin
normal or slightly high temperature

If someone is experiencing these symptoms:

- Move them into an air conditioned environment or a cool, shaded area
- Replace fluids such as water and juice. **AVOID** alcohol and caffeine
- Recommend a cool shower or bath
Encourage them to rest in a cool area

HEATSTROKE is a MEDICAL EMERGENCY, and is usually fatal!!! If you suspect someone is suffering from this condition, **call 9-1-1 IMMEDIATELY!!!**

Heatstroke occurs when the body temperature reaches 105 degrees within minutes and can cause severe brain damage

Symptoms Include:

confusion
faintness
strong, rapid pulse
dry, flushed skin
lack of sweating
bizarre behavior



Important Phone Numbers For Energy Assistance

- HEAP, financial assistance (916) 567-5200
- Salvation Army, financial assistance (916) 442-0303
- CARE, PG&E Discount Program 1-800-278-5472
- SMUD Energy Assistance Program Rate (EAPR) 1-800-433-4327

TIPS ON STAYING SAFE AND COOL For All Ages!

How to PREVENT heat-related illness during hot weather

- Check on elderly and disabled frequently
- Stay Hydrated! Drink a lot of water
- Limit exposure to outdoor and indoor heat
- Spend time in air-conditioned buildings such as shopping malls, senior centers, public libraries, or movie theaters

COOL TIPS

- Take a cool shower or bath
- Eat light, healthy foods that do not need to be cooked
- Do not use appliances such as the oven or dryer during the hottest parts of the day unless absolutely necessary
- Turn off lights, they emit heat!
- Use cool towels around face and neck
- Use hand-held or portable fans
- Keep a spray bottle with cold water handy to cool off with
- Freeze water in bottles to use as ice packs

- Limit visits to overcrowded places during rush hour times
- If outdoors, stay in shaded areas near trees or water
- Plan ahead for necessary outdoor activities
- Dress in light fabrics such as cotton
- Open windows on opposite sides of the building at night to promote air flow
- Cover windows that are exposed to direct sun light
- Keep curtains, shades, and blinds drawn during the daytime
- Close doors or block passage to rooms not in use to concentrate air



Be A Caring Neighbor: Ideas For Making A Difference This Summer

- **Organize a "Friendly Phone Call" System**
Neighbors make phone calls to check on elderly neighbors during hot weather spells
- **Establish an Emergency Contact List**
Create a list of neighbors willing to offer help to the elderly in your neighborhood during an emergency
- **Set up Friendly Visits**
Check to see if neighbors are taking precautions or experiencing dangerous symptoms during hot weather
- **Organize rotating early evening socials at homes around the neighborhood so that air conditioners can be given a break at several homes while residents are out socializing**
- **Help Out With Transportation**
Offer a ride to or from an errand to save time spent outdoors

If energy costs are a factor, take an elderly neighbor to an air-conditioned public facility, such as a senior center, movie theatre, public library, or shopping mall

- **Establish A Caring Neighborhoods Group In Your Community!**
Work with neighbors to provide extra help to the elderly in your neighborhood

Improve your neighborhood by working together for a positive purpose

Make a friendly visit, keep an eye out for strangers, refer elderly neighbors to various services in the community, you decide what your group can do to help!

Call (916) 277-6009 for more information on how you can make yours a Caring Neighborhood.

CITY OF SACRAMENTO



DEPARTMENT OF
PARKS AND
RECREATION
Optimize the
Experience
of Living!

Caring Neighborhoods Program

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