

Emergency checklist

In Australia, extreme heat events are responsible for more deaths than all other natural hazard events combined. It is important to know the risks of heat, who is at risk and how to prepare.

PLAN AHEAD



Make a plan

- Make a plan with family, friends and neighbours to keep in contact during hot weather.
- Identify places you can go to get relief from the heat such as public libraries or parks with plenty of trees and shade.



Get your property ready

- Installing curtains or blinds on the side of your home that faces the sun to keep it cooler during hot weather.
- Consider external awnings, shutters or other shading to prevent sun on windows.
- Check that air-conditioners, fans, refrigerators and freezers are working properly.



Medications

- Learn about medicine storage during hot weather from your doctor or pharmacist.
- Speak to your doctor if you have chronic health conditions or are on regular medications to discuss what to do during hot weather.
- Make sure you have up to date contact details for your general practitioner and pharmacist.

DURING HOT WEATHER



Pay attention to alerts for roads and transport during extreme weather events and bushfire warnings.



If you have air-conditioning, make sure it is set to cool and close curtains and blinds.



Fill ice trays in your freezer or put some cool-packs in the refrigerator.



Avoid going out in the hottest part of the day and stay hydrated.



Bring pets inside if possible or ensure adequate shade and water is provided



For life threatening emergencies, call 000.

AFTER A HEATWAVE

The strain of heat exposure, including disrupted sleep, can be felt after the hot weather has passed.



Stay aware of your health in the days following hot weather and seek medical help if you feel unwell.



Take time to rest and recover.



Continue to drink plenty of water.



Check on family and friends who may be more at risk of the health effects of heat.

HEAT EXPOSURE

Heat-related illness can affect anyone. Heat-related illness includes heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat rash. Dehydration can increase the risk of developing a heat-related illness.

Heat-related conditions

There are four stages of heat illness, with more serious consequences as the condition continues.

Dehydration: Occurs when you use or lose more fluid than you take in, caused by illness, sweating or inadequate intake. Symptoms include increased thirst, tiredness, irritability and dizziness. Ensure affected person drinks plenty of fluids, rests in a cool place and stops activity immediately.

Heat Cramps: painful muscle cramps and spasms due to loss of salt in the body due to excessive sweating. Symptoms include muscle spasms or cramps in limbs and abdomen. Ensure affected person drinks plenty of fluids, rests in a cool place and stops activity immediately.

Heat Exhaustion: Body's response to loss of water and salt through excessive sweating or physical activity. Symptoms include headaches, sweating, muscle weakness or cramps, fatigue, nausea or vomiting, dizziness and poor coordination. Seek medical assistance immediately if person is elderly or very young and rest in a cool place. Drink fluids in slow small sips and cool them down any way possible.

Heat Stroke: Inability for your body to cool itself causing body temperature to rise. If left untreated, this can result in permanent disability or death. Heat stroke requires immediate medical care. Symptoms include headaches, dizziness, nausea, aggressive or strange behavior, rapid pulse and breathing and no sweating. Unconsciousness or seizures may develop. Seek medical help immediately.

If symptoms are worsening and you are concerned about heat stroke, immediately call triple zero (000).



Scan the QR code to find out more about Heatwaves.

www.wsc.nsw.gov.au/Residents/Emergency-Information/Heatwaves

Disclaimer

This information is not intended to supersede any formal advice given to you by an appropriate authority such as NSW Health Current as of April 2024.

Who is vulnerable to heatwave?

Although everyone is vulnerable to the effects of a heatwave, those most at risk are:



Babies, infants and young children

- Don't leave children in parked vehicles.
- Keep hydrated with water, formula, extra feedings.
- Put in lightweight loose clothing.
- Prams can become hot! Do not leave baby to sleep as airflow is restricted.



Elderly and people with a disability

- Medications can increase risk of dehydration.
- People living alone may find it difficult to take care of themselves.
- Aging can mean the amount of sweat produced and blood flow to skin may not be enough to cool the body



Dogs, cats and other pets

- Do not leave in parked vehicles.
- Ensure adequate shade and plenty of water.



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