

July
2022

Environmental Awareness

Heat and sun safety

Longer days of sunshine and summertime activities are in full swing this July. Summer is a great time to get outside and enjoy the warm weather with friends and family. Just remember to be mindful about heat and sun exposure as you dive into your favorite activities this season. Most people know they should take precautions against sunburn. But as temperatures rise, you also need to be aware of heat exhaustion and heat stroke. The more you know about the signs and symptoms of these conditions and how to prevent them, the more you will be able to enjoy being adventurous in the great outdoors.

Heat exhaustion happens when your body temperature rises too quickly to naturally cool itself down. Heavy physical activity in hot conditions raises your risk. It is important to drink plenty of water and take frequent breaks to cool off. It's also helpful to avoid alcohol and caffeine when you are spending a lot of time in the heat.

Another step you can take to keep yourself cool is to learn about the warning signs of heat exhaustion. It is usually accompanied by dehydration. It can cause heavy sweating, confusion, and dizziness. Other symptoms to watch for are headaches, muscle cramps, and vomiting. Immediately move to a cooler environment and drink plenty of fluids if you or anyone else experiences these symptoms. Seek emergency help if symptoms do not improve within 15 minutes of first aid. Untreated heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke.

Heat stroke is a medical emergency. Call 911 immediately when symptoms appear. Symptoms of heat stroke include confusion, seizures, and lack of sweating. Rapid and shallow breathing and a rapid heartrate may also be present. Seek first aid and try to cool the victim until medical help arrives.

Although heat-related illnesses are serious concerns this summer, you can still enjoy the sunshine this season. Just remember to prevent sunburns and heat-related illnesses by following the key points of sun safety:

- Apply sunscreen frequently and evenly throughout the day.
- Use broad spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 that blocks both UVA and UVB rays.
- Wear wide-brimmed hats and avoid tight, dark-colored clothing.
- Avoid sun exposure from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Seek shade when you need a break.

Get outside and enjoy your favorite activities this season now that you have the proper heat exposure tips. Hiking, camping, swimming, and spending time outside are all wonderful activities for your well-being. Reach out to a medical professional or call 911 if you think you are suffering from a serious sunburn or other heat-related illness.

Source: OSHA.gov, CDC.gov, WebMD.com, MayoClinic.org



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Summer Fun Checklist

It's easy to forget to pack the summer essentials when you head outside for a day of fun in the sun. Use the checklist below to make sure you have everything you need before heading out the door this summer.

- ☐ First aid kit
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Refillable water bottles
- ☐ Wide-brimmed hat
- ☐ Sunglasses
- ☐ Change of clothes
- ☐ Change of shoes
- ☐ Swimsuits
- ☐ Blankets/towels
- ☐ Snacks
- ☐ Prepared food (if needed)
- ☐ Iced cooler (if needed)
- ☐ Plenty of water
- ☐ Wagon/stroller
- ☐ Flotation devices
- ☐ Umbrella
- ☐ Car chargers
- ☐ Bug spray

Additional items to bring:

Watch this [video](#) to learn how to respond to heat stroke.

Check out the [8 essentials](#) for building your own first aid kit.

Read this [article](#) for more safety tips to consider this summer.