



Heat can affect anyone. However, it is more likely to affect young children, elderly people and people with health problems. Consult a physician if you have any questions about how your medication may affect your ability to tolerate heat. Heat cramps, exhaustion and heat strokes are very serious conditions that can occur from a heat wave and if not treated they can be life threatening.

Heat Wave Statistics

- Every year, more than 300 people die of heat related illness.
- Heat waves increase the rate of nonfatal illnesses.
- The eastern US experienced a severe two-week heat wave in July of 1993, which caused 118 heat related deaths.



How to Prevent Illness during a Heat Wave

- Stay inside as much as possible. If air conditioning is not available, stay on the lowest floor, out of the sunshine.
- Remember, electric fans do not cool the air, but they do help sweat evaporate, which cools your body.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing when out in the sun.
- Slow down. Avoid strenuous activity.
- Drink plenty of water, even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid alcoholic and caffeinated beverages, which dehydrate the body. Water is the best liquid to drink.
- Eat smaller meals, more often. Avoid foods that are high in protein, because they raise metabolic heat.

American Red Cross Preparedness Information

Being prepared for a heat wave can make all the difference in saving yourself and the lives of family members, saving costs as a result of disasters and maintaining peace of mind. Prepare for hot weather before it happens.

Create and Practice a Family Heat Wave Plan

- Discuss what each member of the family would do during a heat wave and where the safest and coolest places to be are at home.
- If your home does not have air conditioning, choose other places you could go to get relief from the heat during the warmest part of the day.
- Plan changes in your daily activities that would be needed to avoid strenuous work during the warmest part of the day.
- Plan to wear lightweight, light-colored clothing.

Get Trained

- Learn the lifesaving skills of CPR, First Aid and AED. In the event of a heat wave it may take time for first responders to reach your neighborhood. You may be the only person available to assist your family and neighbors.