

Children & Infants Need You to Keep Them Cool & Hydrated When It's Hot

Heat kills. Excessive heat is responsible for the most weather-related fatalities in the U.S. during an average year. Climate change makes it worse. Loss of trees contributes to greater heat and the urban heat island effect. What can you do?

Dress them appropriately: Dress infants and children in lightweight, loose, light-colored clothing.

Keep them Hydrated: Make sure they are drinking plenty of fluids, regardless of how active they are. Stay away from really cold drinks or drinks with too much sugar.

Do Not Leave Children in Cars: Cars can quickly heat up to dangerous temperatures, even with a window cracked open.

Stay Cool Indoors: Stay in an air-conditioned place if possible, and for as long as possible. If your home does not have AC, go to a public place that does – a shopping mall, cinema or public library. Even a few hours spent in air conditioning can help you stay cooler when we go back into the heat. Your local health department may offer heat-relief shelters. Electric fans can provide comfort, but when the temperature is in the high 90s, they will not prevent heat-related illness. Give children a cool shower or bath. Use your stove and oven less.

Schedule Outdoor Activities Carefully: Limit outdoor activity to morning and evening hours when it is likely to be cooler. Cut down on exercise during the heat. Rest in shady areas to give their bodies a chance to recover. If exertion in the heat makes their hearts pound and leaves them gasping for breath, STOP all activity. Get into a cool area or into the shade, and rest, especially if they become lightheaded, confused, weak, or faint.

Wear Sunscreen: Sunburn affects your body's ability to cool down and can make you dehydrated. If you must go outdoors in the sun, protect them by wearing a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses, and by putting on sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher 30 minutes prior to going out.

Avoid Hot and Heavy Meals: They add heat to your body!

Replace Salt and Minerals: Heavy sweating removes salt and minerals from the body that need to be replaced. A sports drink can replace the salt and minerals you lose in sweat.

Seek medical care immediately if your child has symptoms of heat-related illness:

- Hot, red, dry, or damp skin
- Fast pulse
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Confusion
- Passing out
- Heavy sweating
- Cold, pale, and clammy skin
- Muscle cramps
- Tiredness or weakness
- Muscle pain or spasms