



Sweet Summertime

Many of us enjoy the summer weather. But, heat-related illness can pose a risk in high temperatures. It is important to keep hydrated and take frequent breaks in shaded areas when in the heat.

Normally, our bodies keep themselves cool by letting heat escape through the skin and by the evaporation of sweat (perspiration).

When the body does not cool properly or does not cool enough, a person can suffer a heat-related illness, or even die when heat pushes the body beyond its limits.

Alcohol and caffeine are diuretics, and can contribute to dehydration and heat exhaustion. Instead of consuming these beverages, you should keep hydrated with adequate amounts of water or sports drinks.

Drinking alcohol in the heat also can impact your judgment. The more alcohol you consume, the harder it is for you to recognize whether you might have a heat-related illness. The combination of alcohol and heat poses especially serious health risks for older adults and individuals with medical conditions.

Follow the suggestions below to avoid heat-related illness:

- Keep hydrated. Drink non-alcoholic or non-caffeinated beverages, such as water or sports drinks.
- If you decide to drink an alcoholic or caffeinated beverage, be sure to drink plenty of water before, during and after.
- If you take any medication regularly, ask your doctor if you need to be extra cautious when outdoors and in the sun and heat.

If you recognize that you or someone else is showing signs of a heat-related illness, stop activity and find a cool place. Have fun, but stay cool!

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