



10 TIPS FOR EXTREME HEAT SAFETY



In recent years, extreme heat has caused more deaths than all other weather events, including floods. People who are at greater risk from the effects of heat include children, senior citizens and those who live in urban areas. Fortunately there are some simple steps families can take to keep children safe in extreme heat.

- 1 Do NOT leave children unsupervised in parked cars.** Even in less threatening temperatures, vehicles can rapidly heat up to dangerous temperatures. A child left inside a car is at risk for severe heat-related illnesses and/or death, even if the windows are cracked open.
- 2 Seek shelter in cool areas.** Air-conditioning is the best form of protection against heat-related illness, so be sure to spend as much time in air-conditioned spaces (e.g., shopping malls, public libraries, heat-relief shelters) as possible during extreme heat waves.
- 3 Stay informed.** Listen to local news and weather channels for health, safety and weather-related updates, including heat warnings, watches and advisories. Follow the guidance from local officials.
- 4 Wear appropriate clothing and sunscreen.** Choose lightweight, light-colored, and breathable fabrics (such as cotton), as well as broad-spectrum sunscreen (with protection from both UVA and UVB sun rays) to protect you and your child from the heat and potential sun-related skin damage. Hats and umbrellas can be used to limit exposure to harmful sun rays.
- 5 Drink lots of fluids.** Remember to drink plenty of liquids, regardless of your activity level. Check your baby's diaper for concentrated (dark in color) urine, which can indicate dehydration. Fluids should be drunk before, during and after being exposed to extreme heat. Also avoid hot meals as they may increase body heat.
- 6 Know how to identify heat-related illnesses.** Learn symptoms and signs of heat-related illnesses/conditions such as heat stroke, exhaustion, cramps, and severe sunburn. If children show these symptoms, seek medical assistance immediately. Refer to the CDC website for a complete list of health conditions caused by extreme heat exposure, and how to remedy them.



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- 7 Get lots of rest.** Strenuous activities should be reduced, eliminated or rescheduled to the coolest time of the day. Make sure that children get lots of rest when they are active.
- 8 Keep children entertained.** Children may become anxious or restless from being kept indoors. Plan ahead for indoor activities and games and limit the screen-time on televisions, phones and tablets.
- 9 Reassure children.** Children may become fearful or stressed from effects of the heat, such as seeing dead animals. Remember that children take their cues from their parents and caregivers, so try to keep calm and answer their questions openly and honestly.
- 10 Learn your caregivers' disaster plans.** If your child's school or childcare center is in an area that may experience extreme heat, find out what its plans are for in case of extreme heat.

EXTREME HEAT WEATHER TERMS

- **Excessive Heat WATCH** means conditions are favorable for an event to meet or exceed local excessive heat warning criteria in the next 12 to 48 hours.
- **Excessive Heat WARNING** means that heat values are forecast to meet or exceed locally defined warning criteria for at least two days.
- **Excessive Heat ADVISORY** means hazardous heat conditions have begun or will begin within 36 hours and, if caution is not exercised, they could become life-threatening.

The National Weather Service issues alerts for excessive heat on a county-by-county basis. The alerts are broadcast on NOAA Weather Radio and on local radio and television stations. The conditions for an excessive heat watch, warning, and advisory may vary by location.



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The tips above are just the start of knowing how to prepare for and respond to extreme heat. Use the following resources to help ensure your family is ready.

For adults:

- American Academy of Pediatrics: Protecting Children from Heat: Information for Parents. <http://www.healthychildren.org/english/safety-prevention/at-home/pages/Protecting-Children-from-Extreme-Heat-Information-for-Parents.aspx>
- Department of Homeland Security: Extreme Heat. <http://www.ready.gov/heat>

- Department of Health and Human Services: Extreme Heat Events and Health: <http://disaster.nlm.nih.gov/dimrc/extremeheat.html>

For children:

- Department of Homeland Security. Ready Kids: Extreme Heat. <http://www.ready.gov/kids/know-the-facts/extreme-heat>

