

Preventing Heat-Related Illness

A Checklist for People working with Children & Infants Teachers, School Liaisons, Caregivers and Parents

Staying Safe during Extreme Heat

This checklist will help you support the health and safety of children during very hot weather. Use this document to learn more about who is most at-risk, the health effects of extreme heat, methods to keep cool and stay safe at home, and how you can prepare for the dangerously hot weather.

Who Is Most At-Risk?

Infants and young children are more at risk of experiencing negative health effects during very hot weather and some may have multiple risk factors:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> People who work outside | <input type="checkbox"/> People who are homebound |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People experiencing homelessness | <input type="checkbox"/> Older adults |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Athletes | <input type="checkbox"/> Infants and young children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People without A/C | <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant people |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People who live alone | <input type="checkbox"/> People with some chronic medical conditions |

How can you check on young children?

Keeping children healthy and safe from heat-related illnesses is especially important during times of extreme heat. Check off these boxes to ensure that children have the resources they need to stay healthy and comfortable during very hot days.

- Children and caregivers have access to working air conditioning (a/c). Using a/c is the best way to stay safe and healthy.
- Children and caregivers frequently uses a/c.
- Children and caregivers does not use a/c, even though they have access.
- Children and caregivers have access to transportation to go somewhere else when it is very hot, if they do not have a/c. If so, where:
 - A family member or friend's home with a/c.
 - A library, rec center, or other public space with a/c.
 - Another location: _____
- Spend as much time indoors, in air conditioning as possible.
- Teach children to take frequent drink breaks and "wet down" or mist themselves with a spray bottle to avoid becoming overheated.
- Strenuous activities should be reduced, eliminated or rescheduled to the coolest time of the day. Make sure children get lots of rest when they are active.
- Children covers their head, wears sunglasses and dresses in light colored, lightweight, loose-fitting clothing.
- Children are staying hydrated and drinking cool water or healthy beverages throughout the day. Note: caffeine and sugary drinks can cause dehydration.
- Children with medical condition or taking medications, should follow up with their primary care provider for further advice on preventing heat-related illnesses and considerations specific to their condition or medication.

What are the Signs and Symptoms of Heat-Related Illness?

Exposure to extreme heat can cause make some people extremely sick and make some chronic conditions worse. Note if your child, client or student is experiencing any of the following signs and symptoms of heat-related illness and respond appropriately.

Heat Stroke

- Very high body temperature (103 F or higher)
- Confusion
- Hot, red, dry, or damp skin
- Fast, strong pulse
- Pounding Headache
- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Losing consciousness

Heat stroke is an emergency, call 911.

Heat Exhaustion

- Heavy sweating
- Cold, pale, and clammy skin
- Fast, weak pulse
- Nausea or vomiting
- Muscle Cramps
- Tiredness or weakness
- Headache
- Fainting

Cool down immediately and seek medical attention if the person does not feel better after an hour.

How Can You Plan to Keep Infants/Young Children Safe?

To help keep infants and children safe and healthy this summer, have a plan, stay informed, and share the below resources:

- Ensure that your organization is enrolled in the PDPH Community Response Partner Network at bit.ly/PhillyCRPN to receive notifications when the City declares a Heat Health Emergency. During a Heat Health Emergency, the following services are activated:
 - The [Philadelphia Corporation for Aging's Heatline](#) is open for calls. Any Philadelphia resident can call [\(215\) 765-9040](tel:2157659040) to get safety tips and talk to medical professionals to discuss health issues.
 - City-operated [cooling centers](#) are open for extended hours. Cooling centers are air conditioned public spaces like libraries, senior centers, and recreation centers. Call [311](tel:311) or go to bit.ly/PhilaCoolingCenters for cooling center locations.
 - Philadelphia's power utility company PECO [halts utility shut-offs](#). For the duration of the Heat Health Emergency, PECO will not turn off the power of customers' homes due to unpaid bills.
- Sign up for [Ready Philadelphia](#): To receive free text alerts to your phone on emergencies and severe weather, text "[ReadyPhila](#)" to [888-777](tel:888777).
- Prepare and train staff on summer heat safety and heat-related illness each spring.
- Review the risk factors associated with heat-related illness with staff during extreme heat events.
- Review the signs and symptoms of heat-related illness during extreme heat events.
- Help develop a heat emergency plan for your organization, which addresses special operations to ensure at risk populations stay healthy during extreme heat events.
- Notify clients when extreme heat is in the forecast.
- Provide families and staff with educational materials, including the PDPH Heat Brochure and Summer Newsletter, available at bit.ly/PHPmaterials.