

Preventing Heat-Related Illness



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

Use the checklist to identify who is most likely to get sick, how to help them stay cool, and what resources are available during extreme heat events.

For more information on heat safety, visit www.phila.gov/heat.

Who Is Most At-Risk?

Infants and young children may be more likely to get sick 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?

Use this checklist to ensure children and infants can stay cool and caregivers have the resources needed during very hot days.

- Child is wearing loose fitting clothing, made from breathable fabric (e.g., cotton).
- Child wears shade protection such as a hat and sunglasses.
- Child takes frequent drink breaks and mists themselves with a spray bottle to avoid overheating, a technique known as “wetting down”.
- Child is staying hydrated and drinking cool water or fruit juice throughout the day. Note: caffeine and sugary drinks can cause dehydration.
- Children and caregivers have access to an electric fan to help circulate cool air. Note: fans will not prevent heat-related illness in temperatures greater than 95°F.
- 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 do not use a/c, even though they have access. You have asked them why and discussed options to make a/c more accessible to them, such as utility assistance or an alternative location.
- 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, recreation center, or other public space with a/c.
 - Another location: _____
- Children and caregivers knows where the closest cooling site is and how to check if it is open during an extreme heat event. (Call 311 or visit bit.ly/PHLHeatSafety).
- Caregiver has a plan to access cooling in case power goes out in their home.
- Child spends as much time indoors with air conditioning as much as possible.
- Child reduces, stops, or reschedules strenuous activity, especially during the hottest time of the day (10am-4pm).
- Children with medical conditions or taking medications follow up with a primary care provider for advice on preventing heat-related illnesses and medication management.

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

Exposure to extreme heat can 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 one hour.

How Can You Plan to Keep Young Children Safe?

To help keep infants and young children safe and healthy this summer, ensure you have a plan, stay informed, and share resources about available services.

- Sign up for [Ready Philadelphia](#): To receive free text alerts to your phone on emergencies and severe weather, text "[ReadyPhila](#)" to **888-777**. Alerts are now available in eleven languages.
- Enroll in the PDPH Community Response Partner Network at bit.ly/CRPNnewsletters to receive notifications when the City declares a Heat Health Emergency and details about public health emergencies in Philadelphia.

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** 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** or go to bit.ly/PHLHeatSafety 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.

- Each spring, prepare and train staff on heat-related illness, heat safety and essential resources.
- Develop a heat emergency plan for you or your organization to ensure at-risk populations know what to do to stay healthy during extreme heat events.
- Notify clients and caregivers when extreme heat is in the forecast.
- Provide families and staff with educational materials, including the PDPH Heat Brochure, available at bit.ly/PHPmaterials.
- Provide families with utility assistance information early in the season, so they can prepare to afford air conditioning. Offer the summer utility assistance flyer, available at bit.ly/PHPmaterials.