

Facilities

- Check fridges and freezers work properly.
- Check fans and/or air conditioning work properly.
- Check that people have light, loose-fitting, cotton clothing to wear.

Organisation

- Check that extra care and support is available.
- Check that the person can contact the Primary Care team if one of their informal carers is unavailable.
- Check GP and healthcare professional contact details are available.
- Check that there are adequate arrangements for food shopping.

If a heatwave is forecast for your region

- Make sure you have taken the steps outlined in this leaflet.
- Speak to your GP or healthcare professional if you need further advice.
- Make sure you know what advice and support to give people at risk.

Stay cool in hot weather.



Emergency treatment

- Take the person's temperature. If possible, move them somewhere cooler.
- Encourage them to drink fluids, if they are conscious.
- Do not give them aspirin or paracetamol.
- Cool them down as quickly as possible – give them a cool shower, sprinkle them with water or wrap them in a damp sheet, with a fan to create an air current.

Next step

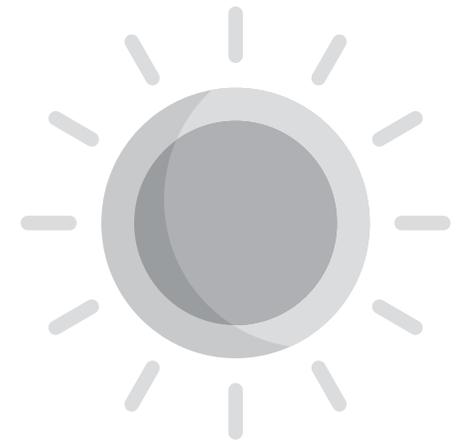
- **Call 999 for urgent medical help.**



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Information for everyone

Take Care During a Heatwave



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Extreme heat is dangerous to everyone.

During a heatwave, when temperatures remain abnormally high over more than a couple of days, it can prove fatal. Climate change means heatwaves are likely to become more common in England.

On 19 July 2016 the Office for National Statistics reported a rise of 400 more deaths compared to the five year average of the hottest day of the year, with the highest point recorded at 33.5°C.

At-risk groups include:

- older people, especially those over 75 and/or living on their own;
- babies and young children, especially those under four years old;
- people suffering from mental ill health, those with dementia and those who rely on help from other people to manage day-to-day activities;
- people taking certain types of medication (see 'Medication');
- people with an already raised temperature from an infection;
- people using psychoactive drugs, including alcohol or illicit drugs;
- people who are bed-bound;
- people who have previously experienced problems in adapting to extreme heat; and
- people suffering from chronic illnesses and/or frailty are likely to be at particular risk.

What are the risks?

Heat exhaustion is usually one of the first signs that someone is at risk of developing heatstroke.

- Symptoms include: headaches, dizziness, nausea and vomiting, sleep problems, muscle weakness or cramps, pale skin, weak pulse and high temperature.

Heatstroke can result in organ failure, brain damage or death.

- It can develop if the symptoms of heat exhaustion are left untreated. It can also occur suddenly and without warning.
- Symptoms include: confusion and disorientation, convulsions, unconsciousness, racing, thumping pulse, flushed, hot and dry skin and very sudden rise in temperature.

Reducing the risk for vulnerable people

- Ensure those who are at risk can be accessed in the event of a heatwave.
- Anyone living alone needs daily contact.
- Support those with mobility and mental health issues; living in accommodation difficult to keep cool; or on certain medication.

Hydration

Ask yourself and others – “Are you drinking enough?”

- Drink 6–8 glasses (1½–2L) of fluid per day – more if it's very hot. Eat normally, but consider food which supplies additional fluids such as fruit, ice-cream, jelly and lollies (unless otherwise directed by a healthcare professional).
- Keep a bottle of water or flask in your fridge or with you so you have a readily accessible supply.

Medication

- There is a list of drugs that can increase the risk of heat exhaustion or heatstroke in susceptible individuals. Please seek advice from your doctor or pharmacist for a review of medications and assessment of the risks and benefits of any changes.

Environment

- Make sure your environment is shaded from direct sunlight and adequately ventilated, secure and comfortable – or move to a more appropriate and safe room.
- Use cool water to reduce the heat on your skin.
- Use fans if you find it difficult to keep cool.
- If you are travelling, take fluids on your journey.

