

Staying Safe from the Heat

With the summer temperatures reaching in the upper 90s to over 100 degrees, we should take precautions to guard against overheating and the possibility of even a heat stroke.

A heat stroke can occur when your body overheats because it no longer has enough water to keep it cool. You stop sweating and you may become dizzy, weak or unconscious. This is a life threatening condition. Emergency steps should be taken, including calling 911.

During physical activity, your body temperature rises because muscles generate about 20 times more heat when you are active than when you are at rest. As your temperature rises, you begin to sweat. Sweating takes the extra heat and releases it to keep the body cool.

The more active you are, the more water you lose. It is important to replace water lost through sweating so you don't over heat. When water is not replaced, the body temperature goes up. If you notice you are not sweating during physical activity, the you could suffer from a heat stroke.

You can get water many different ways. You don't always have to drink it. Almost any nonalcoholic fluid will do as well as foods with high water content such as fruits and vegetables. Try not to have too many drinks with caffeine because the caffeine causes your body to lose water faster. Keep plenty of food and drinks that you like around while participating in physical activity.

Stay hydrated. Drink two to four cups of water every hour while working or exercising outside. Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink more fluids. You will know how much water you have taken in by the color of your urine. It should be pale or clear in color.

If you or anyone else shows signs of heatstroke, it is best to seek medication attention. Until help arrives, drink about ½ a cup of water at room temperature, every 15 minutes and lie down in a shaded area.

Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention