

## In This Issue

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## Community Resources and Support

Remember that you're not alone in protecting children during heatwaves. Reach out to local community centers, health departments, and schools for information on [cooling centers](#), swimming pools, and other facilities that offer relief from the heat.

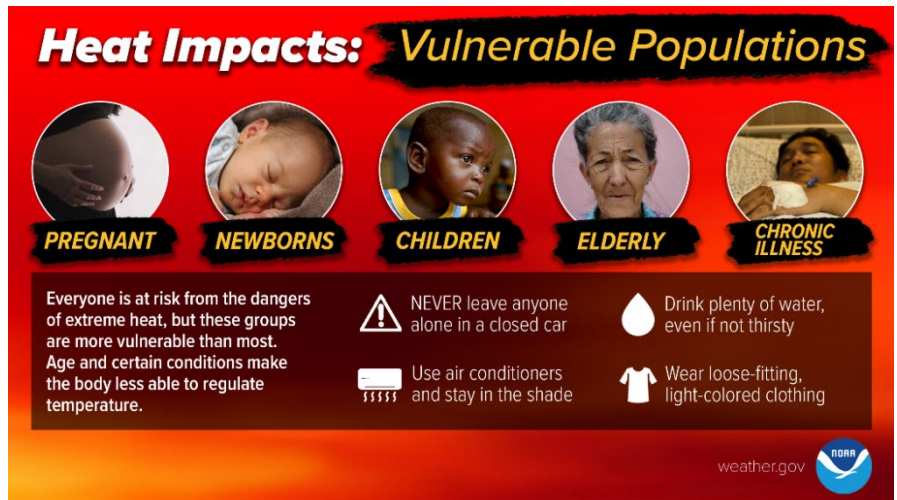
**REMEMBER:** The best defense against heat-related adverse health effects is preparation and vigilance. Let's make this summer a memorable one for all the right reasons, filled with fun, laughter, and, most importantly, the safety of our children.

By staying informed, taking preventative measures, and recognizing the signs of heat-related issues, we can ensure our little ones enjoy a safe and enjoyable summer.

Welcome to the latest edition of "Healthy Environments and Lives," your go-to newsletter for important information and tips on environmental health matters affecting children. In this edition, we discuss heat-related issues. As summer approaches, it is crucial to stay informed and take proactive measures to ensure our little ones stay safe and healthy in the scorching heat. Dive in!

## Understanding Heatwaves and Their Impact

Heatwaves occur when temperatures rise significantly above the average for an extended period. Extreme heat may cause heat exhaustion and/or heat stroke (symptoms shown below). Heatwaves pose serious health risks to everyone, especially children and those with chronic health conditions. Children's bodies are less efficient at regulating temperature. This makes them more susceptible to heat-related illnesses.




**Heat Impacts: Vulnerable Populations**

**PREGNANT** **NEWBORNS** **CHILDREN** **ELDERLY** **CHRONIC ILLNESS**

Everyone is at risk from the dangers of extreme heat, but these groups are more vulnerable than most. Age and certain conditions make the body less able to regulate temperature.

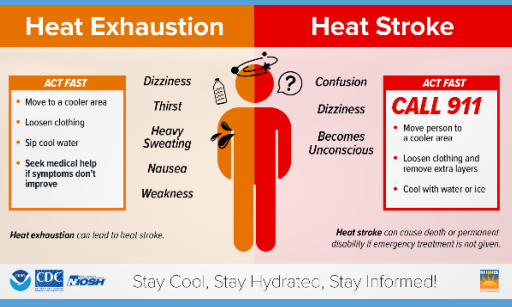
- NEVER leave anyone alone in a closed car
- Use air conditioners and stay in the shade
- Drink plenty of water, even if not thirsty
- Wear loose-fitting, light-colored clothing

weather.gov 

## Recognizing Heat-related Issues in Children



It is essential to be aware of the signs and symptoms of heat-related issues in children. Watch out for the following:

1. **Dehydration:** Dry mouth, lack of tears when crying, dark yellow urine, dry diapers, irritability, and lethargy.
2. **Heat Exhaustion:** Heavy sweating, weakness, dizziness, headache, nausea, vomiting, muscle cramps, and pale or clammy skin.
3. **Heatstroke:** High body temperature (above 103°F/39.4°C), hot and dry skin, rapid pulse, confusion, unconsciousness, and seizures. Heatstroke is a medical emergency and requires immediate attention.



Heat Exhaustion	Heat Stroke
<p><b>ACT FAST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move to a cooler area</li> <li>• Loosen clothing</li> <li>• Sip cool water</li> <li>• Seek medical help if symptoms don't improve</li> </ul>	<p><b>ACT FAST</b></p> <p><b>CALL 911</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move person to a cooler area</li> <li>• Loosen clothing and remove extra layers</li> <li>• Cool with water or ice</li> </ul>
<p>Dizziness Thirst Heavy Sweating Nausea Weakness</p>	<p>Confusion Dizziness Becomes Unconscious</p>
<p>Heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke.</p>	<p>Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not given.</p>

Stay Cool, Stay Hydrated, Stay Informed!

## Contact Us

Division of Environmental Health  
Epidemiology  
Bureau of Epidemiology  
Pennsylvania Department of Health  
Health and Welfare Building  
625 Forster Street, Harrisburg PA 17120  
Phone: 717.787.3350  
Email: [dehe@pa.gov](mailto:dehe@pa.gov)

## Other Resources

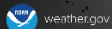
- Extreme Heat Cooling Programs
- <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extreme-heat/warning.html>
- <https://www.weather.gov/>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extreme-heat/heattips.html>
- <https://www.weather.gov/safety/heat-index>
- <https://www.weather.gov/safety/heat-illness>
- <https://www.epa.gov/heatislands>
- <https://www.weather.gov/safety/heat>
- <https://www.heat.gov/pages/who-is-at-risk-to-extreme-heat>

### EXCESSIVE HEAT WATCH

An Excessive Heat Watch is issued when **dangerous heat is possible**.

Reschedule outdoor activities in the coming days. Make sure that children, the elderly, and pets have a place to cool off during the heat.

**Be Prepared.**



### EXCESSIVE HEAT WARNING

An Excessive Heat Warning is issued when **dangerous heat is happening or about to happen**.

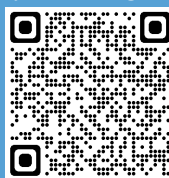
Avoid heavy activity & direct sunlight. Stay hydrated, find a cool indoor place, and check on children, elderly & pets.

**Take Action!**

Learn more by scanning the QR codes.



Heat Safety Tips



Heat Island Effect

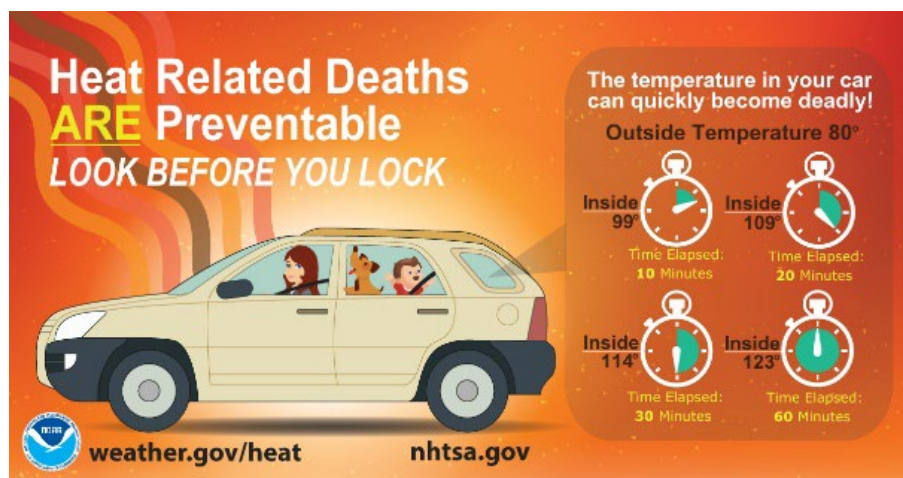


Heat Illnesses

## Tips to Keep Children Safe and Cool

Prevention is the key to ensuring children's well-being during heatwaves. Here are some practical tips to help you protect your children:

1. **Stay Hydrated:** Encourage your child to drink plenty of fluids, even if they don't feel thirsty. Water, diluted fruit juices, and oral rehydration solutions are excellent choices. Avoid sugary drinks and caffeinated beverages.
2. **Dress Appropriately:** Dress children in lightweight, loose-fitting clothing made of breathable fabrics like cotton - opt for light-colored clothing that reflects sunlight.
3. **Limit Outdoor Activities:** During peak heat hours (usually 10 am to 4 pm), limit children's exposure to the sun. If they must be outside, choose shaded areas and plan activities in the cooler parts of the day. If possible, consider adding shade (artificially or by planting trees) to outdoor play areas.
4. **Apply Sunscreen:** Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. Apply it generously and reapply every two hours, especially if children are swimming, playing with water tables or sprinklers, or sweating.



5. **Create a Cool Environment:** Keep your home or facility cool by using fans, air conditioning, or open windows during cooler hours. Avoid using electric fans when the temperature is above 95°F/35°C, as they can increase the risk of heat-related illness.
6. **Never Leave Children in Hot Vehicles:** It's crucial to never leave children unattended in a parked vehicle, even for a short period. Temperatures inside a car can skyrocket within minutes (even in the shade), leading to heatstroke and even death.
7. **Know When to Seek Medical Help:** If a child exhibits signs of severe dehydration, heat exhaustion, or heatstroke, it's essential to seek medical attention immediately. Call emergency services and take immediate steps to cool the child down while waiting for help.

Stay cool, stay safe, and stay informed! If you have any concerns or questions regarding heat-related issues in children or need further guidance, do not hesitate to consult with a pediatrician or other healthcare provider.