Preventing Heat-related Illness (HRI)  
Protect Yourself and Others

- Heat-related illness can affect everyone, especially vulnerable populations.
- Heat exhaustion and heat stroke are dangerous and can be life threatening.

Watch for signs of heat-related illnesses and take actions to help yourself and others. Learn and look for the warning signs of heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke.

Types of heat-related illness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heat Exhaustion Symptoms</th>
<th>Heat Stroke Symptoms</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heavy sweating</td>
<td>Very high body temperature</td>
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<tr>
<td>Headache</td>
<td>Red, hot, dry skin (no sweating)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weakness</td>
<td>Rapid, strong pulse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fatigue</td>
<td>Headache</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dizziness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nausea or vomiting</td>
<td>Nausea</td>
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<tr>
<td>Muscle cramp</td>
<td>Confusion, loss of consciousness</td>
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What to do for heat exhaustion

- Move to a cool place
- Loosen clothing
- Put cool, wet cloths on body or take cool bath
- Drink cool water

Get medical help for any of the following:

- Person throws up or cannot drink
- Symptoms get worse
- Symptoms last longer than one hour

What to do for heat stroke

Seek immediate medical attention
Call 9-1-1 right away

- Move the person to a cooler place
- Help lower the person’s temperature with cool cloths or cool bath
Who is most at risk for heat-related illness?

- People older than 65
- Outdoor workers
- Infants and children
- People who live alone
- People without air conditioning
- People with chronic conditions (e.g., diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and respiratory disease)
- People on certain medications

Age and Gender breakdown of 857 people who went to NJ Emergency Departments in 2021

Heat-related Illness, Age-specific Rate of Emergency Department Visits, NJ, 2021
**Actions you should or can take to prevent HRI**

**Beware of hot cars.** Never leave children, people with disabilities, elderly persons, or pets in a parked car, even for a short time. On an 80°F day, the temperature inside a car can reach 100°F in less than 10 minutes.

**Children, People with Disabilities, and Pets in Cars**

- It only takes **two minutes** for a car to reach unsafe temperatures.
- Even the most caring and watchful person can forget a child or pet is in the vehicle. Always check to make sure all children and pets are out of the car before locking it and walking away.
- Teach children that cars are not safe places to play. Store your keys out of reach of children.
- Leave pets at home when you can.

**Avoid the hottest part of the day.** Check the weather report and schedule outdoor activities to avoid the hottest hours of the day. Wear lightweight, loose, light-colored clothing and take frequent, air-conditioned breaks. Avoid direct sunlight.

**Check on your neighbors and loved ones.** In an extreme heat event, check to make sure that your neighbors and loved ones are safe, and look for signs of heat-related illness, especially if the person is elderly or lives alone.

For people without air conditioning or vulnerable populations, call **NJ 2-1-1** for information regarding Cooling Centers, visit: [nj211.org/nj-cooling-centers](https://nj211.org/nj-cooling-centers) or go to your county’s Office of Emergency Management.
**Stay Hydrated.** Drink more water than usual and drink before you get thirsty. Avoid alcohol or liquids that have high amounts of sugar and/or caffeine. It is also important to eat regular meals that replace salt lost from sweating. When working or being active in the heat, drink about one quart of water per hour.

![Image of water bottles and measurements](image)

**Stay informed.** Get alerts from your county or local emergency management office by signing up for email and/or text alerts. Pay attention to weather reports when it is hot or if a heat emergency is declared. Many weather phone apps also provide National Weather Service (NWS) heat alert information.

**Protect yourself and your employees if you are working outside**

**For outdoor workers.** Please visit the CDC/National Institute for Occupational and Safety (NIOSH) Heat Stress webpage for comprehensive guidance/actions to protect workers from heat-related illness: [cdc.gov/niosh/topics/heatstress/default.html](https://cdc.gov/niosh/topics/heatstress/default.html).


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**Other Resources**

- CDC’s Warning Signs and Symptoms of Heat-Related Illness: [cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat.warning.html](https://cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat.warning.html)
- CDC’s Extreme Heat: [cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/](https://cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/)
- CDC’s Heat Stress and Hydration: [cdc.gov/niosh/mining/userfiles/works/pdfs/2017-126.pdf](https://cdc.gov/niosh/mining/userfiles/works/pdfs/2017-126.pdf)
- CDC’s Protecting Vulnerable Groups from Extreme Heat: [cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/specificgroups.html](https://cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/specificgroups.html)
- Ready.gov’s Extreme Heat: [ready.gov/heat](https://ready.gov/heat)