

Heat Action Plan and Tip Sheet

For Patients

This sheet provides tips and helps make a plan for patients and caregivers on how to stay safe in the heat.

Heat is dangerous for your health. It can be dangerous even when the temperature is not extremely high

Hot weather increases the risk of heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heart attacks, strokes, dehydration, mental health crises, and many other health problems.

Things like humidity can make it feel hotter even when the temperature is not as high, and the intensity of the sun can make heat more dangerous. **High temperatures at night** or unusual temperatures for where you live may be especially risky.

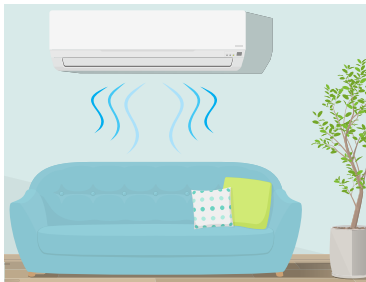
Local heat risk can be checked here: <https://ephtracking.cdc.gov/Applications/HeatRisk/>

I will check my local weather forecast here: _____

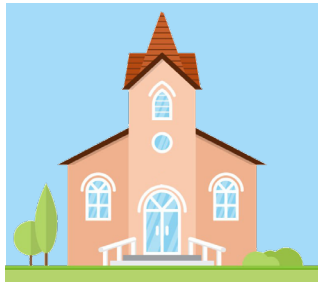
I may be at risk when the temperature is over: _____

If you feel hot, even if there is not a heat advisory or heat warning, use the following tips to stay safe.

Go somewhere cooler if it feels too hot for you where you are



Family or friend's house
with air conditioning



Place of worship



Local businesses,
community centers and
shopping centers



Shaded area

To cool off, I will: _____

If needed, I can go to: _____

I will get there by: _____

Know what to do if you or someone around you is suffering from a heat-related illness

Heat exhaustion vs. heat stroke

Heat Exhaustion

Heat Exhaustion symptoms that need emergency medical attention include

- feeling weak or extremely tired
- nausea
- heavy sweating
- feeling light-headed or as if you might pass out

Treatment:

- Seek care in a hospital emergency room
- Drink cold water and electrolytes
- Get to a cooler location or wet skin and sit in front of a fan



Heat Stroke

Heat stroke symptoms that need emergency medical attention include

- unconsciousness
- convulsions or seizures
- difficulty breathing
- confusion or slurred speech

Heat stroke victims may look drunk. They need to be aggressively cooled immediately.

Treatment:

- Immediately call 9-1-1
- Remove clothing and pour cold water on them
- If you have a fan, pour water on them and aim it at them
- If you can put them in ice water while protecting their ability to breathe, do that while working on getting them to hospital

Without treatment, symptoms can get worse. Heat stroke patients can die if they don't get immediate treatment.



Other heat-related symptoms include cramps, heat rash, thirst, and mild fatigue.

Treatment: • Drink cold water and electrolytes • Get to a cooler location or wet skin and sit in front of a fan

Adapted from the National Weather Service and U.S. CDC

I will watch for signs of heat illness including: _____

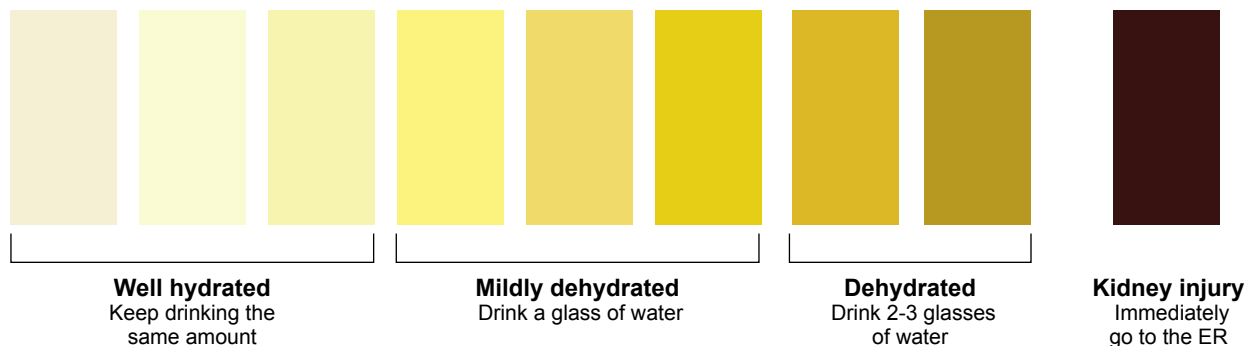
If someone is showing signs of heat related illness, it is very important to **cool first while waiting for transport** if needed. You can mist with cool air and a fan, use ice packs over the body and move to a cooler place close by (shade or air-conditioned room).

Drink plenty of water

- Do not wait until you feel thirsty—drink water throughout the day.
- Weight is your best indicator for dehydration: check your weight daily when it is hot.
- If your urine is dark, you probably need to drink more water.
- If you have heart or kidney problems, ask your doctor how much you should drink.

Here is a way to look at your urine or pee color to see how hydrated you are.

Urine color chart to assess hydration



The colors on this chart should only be used as a guide and not replace advice from a health professional.
Chart adapted from <http://healthdirect.gov.au>

Drink



Drink water and electrolytes.

Reduce



Reduce consumption of sugary drinks or highly caffeinated drinks.

Avoid



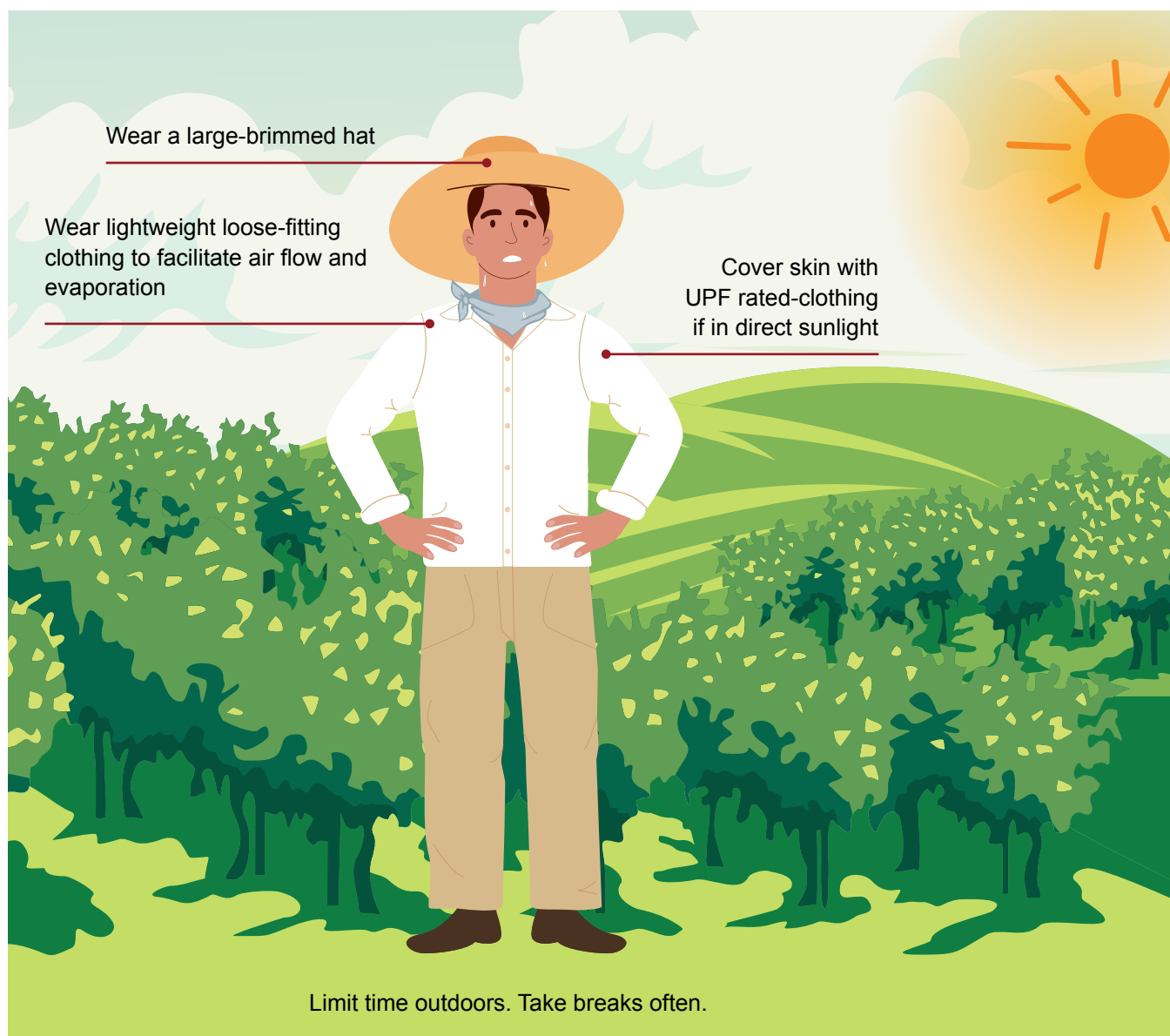
Avoid alcohol as it can impair decision-making and increase dehydration.

If you are drinking a lot of water to stay hydrated, make sure to add a little extra salt to your food or add some oral rehydration salts or electrolytes to your water. If you drink nothing but water and do not eat or take in electrolytes, you can experience health problems caused by abnormally low electrolyte levels.

Signs of dehydration or electrolyte problems include feeling nausea, dizziness, headaches, muscle cramps and weakness.

To stay hydrated, I will drink: _____

Wear loose-fitting, lightweight clothing in light colors as well as a hat or head covering



To stay cool, I will wear: _____

Do outdoor work when it is cool in the morning or evening when you can

Heat is most dangerous in the middle of the day. If you must work, travel, or exercise outside, early morning and evening are safer options.

If you must work in the heat:

- Know the signs of heat related illness including nausea, headache, muscle cramps, extra sweating, weakness, or dizziness.
- Take frequent breaks in the shade or in a cool space.
- Be aware risks of injury when working in the heat is higher so be extra careful when working in the heat.
- Drink plenty of water- ideally at least one cup (8 oz) every 20 minutes while working outdoors.
- Talk about a heat safety plan with others.

To stay safe at work, I will: _____

Take steps to cool down

- Wet your body with cool water such as with a spray bottle, shower, or bath.
- Running a fan can help, but if the temperature is above 35°C or 95°F, also wet your skin with water, and try to move to a space with air conditioning.
- If you can, open the windows in your home when it is cooler outside, in the early mornings or late evenings, to cool down inside.
- If possible, move to a space with air conditioning in your home or neighborhood.

Take your medicines as prescribed unless your provider says otherwise

If you have heart problems, kidney problems, a mental health condition, or other health conditions, talk to your healthcare provider. **Medications and Heat (For Patients)**

My healthcare provider told me to do the following when it is hot out:

Consider your risk factors

If you, or a loved one, are in any of the following groups, also review the **Tips for People with Specific Health Conditions or Risk Factors**.

- Babies or small children
- Chronic medications
- Dementia
- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Kidney disease
- Limited mobility
- Lung diseases (like asthma or COPD)
- Mental health conditions
- Multiple sclerosis
- Older adults
- Outdoor workers
- Pregnancy and breastfeeding
- Substance use

Notes: