

Heat Awareness

Tolls of extreme heat:

- Heat kills by taxing the human body beyond its abilities
- 175 people succumb to the demands of heat on an annual basis
- In the heat wave of 1980, more than 1,250 people died

Contributing factors:

- Stagnant air conditions in cities add the stress of pollution
- Sunburn can significantly retard the skin's ability to shed excess heat
- Alcohol and certain medications can limit the ability to shed excess heat

What to look for:

- National Weather Service *heat advisories* and *excessive heat warnings*
- NWS forecasts which headline advisories and warnings
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Heat Advisory – Issued when the Heat Index (HI), which combines the effects of high temperatures and relative humidity, is expected to be at least 105 degrees for 3 hours or more.

Excessive Heat Warning – Issued when the Heat Index is expected to be at least 115 degrees for 3 hours or more.

How to prevent heat disorders:

- Drink plenty of water, even before you feel thirsty
- Slow down – reduce, reschedule or eliminate strenuous activity
- Dress for heat – wear lightweight, light-colored clothing
- Plan your activities to avoid the sun during the heat of the day

Heat disorders, symptoms and actions:

HEAT EXHAUSTION symptoms include heavy sweating, weakness, cold and/or pale clammy skin, and thready pulse. **Actions include:** *Get the victim out of the sun immediately, lay the victim down and loosen clothing, apply cool wet cloths, give sips of water unless nausea occurs.*

HEAT STROKE symptoms include hot and/or dry skin, a rapid and strong pulse, possible unconsciousness. Heat stroke is life threatening! **Actions include:** *Summon medical help or take to hospital, move the victim to a cooler environment, bathe or sponge with cool water, do not give fluids.*