



Public Health
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Champaign-Urbana Public Health District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Equation for Disaster: High Temperatures + High Humidity = High Risk for Heat Related Illness

Champaign-Urbana Public Health District Urges the Public to Watch for Symptoms of Heat Related Illness in High Risk Populations Such as Children and the Elderly.

Champaign, IL – Summer is reportedly the time for “fun in the sun”, however when high temperatures combine with high humidity the “fun” may be short lived. The Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (CUPHD) urges the public to watch for the symptoms of heat related illness, and to take precautions to keep their families and communities safe.

Heat related illness can take many forms from a mild case of Heat Exhaustion to a more serious and life-threatening case of Heat Stroke. Heat related illnesses occur when the body becomes unable to control its temperature. The body’s temperature rises rapidly and the body loses its ability to perspire and cannot cool down. Rising to temperatures of 106° F or higher within 10 to 15 minutes, heat related illness can result in death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not provided.

Signs & Symptoms of Heat Related Illness:

- An extremely high body temperature of 103° F or higher
- Red, hot and dry skin (no signs or perspiration)
- Rapid, strong pulse
- Throbbing Headache
- Dizziness or confusion
- Nausea

Never leave children, the elderly or pets in a parked car – even for a few minutes with the windows partially open. The metal of the vehicle conducts and concentrates the intense heat and brain damage or even death can occur from the rapid rise of temperature in the

vehicle. Children, the elderly and pets are especially susceptible to heat related illness due to a variety of factors including but not limited to the inability to adjust to sudden changes in temperature, lack of access to adequate fluids, tendency to retain more body heat, and over activity or exertion leading to dehydration.

Precautions to Avoid Heat Related Illness:

- Stay hydrated. Drink at least 48-64 ounces of cool non-caffeinated and non-alcoholic beverages (caffeine & alcohol are diuretics and will increase dehydration). Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink.
- Reduce the amount of activity in hottest parts of the day. If you must be active during those times, strive to take frequent breaks in a shady or cool area.
- Wear light colored and lightweight clothes.
- Take a cool shower or sponge bath if you being feeling over heated.
- Retreat to an air-conditioned environment if you begin feel overly warm. If you do not have air-conditioning, consider visiting a mall, grocery store or other public place to cool off.

If you or someone you know shows signs of a heat related illness, have someone call for medical assistance while you begin the cooling process:

- Take the person to an air-conditioned, cool or shady area.
- Cool the person rapidly by spraying with cold water form a shower or garden hose.
- Monitor the body temperature carefully until the temperature drops below 101° - 102° F.
- Give plenty or cool (not cold) non-caffeinated, non-alcoholic beverages to drink.
- Get medical assistance as soon as possible.

Anyone can suffer a heat related illness. CUPHD urges every one to take precautions in the summer heat, and to check on children and the elderly frequently.

For more information, please contact CUPHD at (217) 352-7961 or visit our website at www.cuphd.org.

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