

# Prevent Heat-Related Illness (HRI) Protect yourself and others

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

## Recognition and Treatment

### Heat Exhaustion Signs

- Heavy sweating
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Muscle cramps
- Weakness
- Fatigue
- Dizziness

### What to do

- Move to a cool place.
- Loosen clothing.
- Put cool, wet cloths on body or take a cool bath.
- Drink cool water.
- Get medical help for any of the following:
  - Throwing up or cannot drink
  - Symptoms get worse
  - Symptoms last longer than one hour

### Heat Stroke Signs

- Very high body temperature
- Red, hot, dry skin (no sweating)
- Rapid, strong pulse
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Confusion, loss of consciousness

### What to do

- Seek immediate medical attention.  
**Call 9-1-1 right away.**
- Move to a cool place.
- Lower temperature with cool cloths or a 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 (e.g., diuretics, some antipsychotic medications, some antidepressants, some antihypertensive agents)

Learn more about heat-related illness and how to protect yourself and your loved one. Visit [bit.ly/4lpGWrY](https://bit.ly/4lpGWrY).

# Prevention

## Actions you can take to prevent HRI

### For yourself

- **Stay hydrated.** Drink more water than usual and drink before you get thirsty. When working or being active in the heat, drink about one quart of water per hour.
- Avoid alcohol or liquids that have high amounts of sugar and/or caffeine.
- If you need to be outside:
  - Wear lightweight, loose, light-colored clothing.
  - Take frequent, air-conditioned breaks.
  - Avoid direct sunlight.



**Check weather reports and reschedule or postpone outdoor activities to another time or day when temperatures are cooler.**

**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).**

### For others

#### Use a Buddy System

- Check on friends, neighbors, older adults, those who have health conditions and/or are on certain medications that can make them more vulnerable to extreme heat. Help others find a cooling center or access to indoor environments with air conditioning.

#### Beware of hot cars

- It only takes two minutes for a car to reach unsafe temperatures.
- Never leave infants, children, people with disabilities, elderly persons, or pets in a parked car.
- 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.

### For pets

Pets feel the heat just as much as humans do, and they can also suffer from heat-related illnesses.

Follow these guidelines to protect your pet when it's hot:

- Never leave your pet in a parked car. Cracked windows won't protect your pet from suffering from heat stroke, or worse, during hot summer days.
- Provide fresh, cool water every day in a tip-proof bowl.
- Exercise pets in the early morning or evening hours.
- Avoid exposure to asphalt and concrete, which can get very hot and cause severe burns on the pads of your pet's feet.
- Always provide your pet with shade and shelter to protect it from extreme temperatures.

