



Public Health

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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DATE: July 15, 2014

HEADLINE: Public Health Issues Hot Weather Precautions

LEWISTON, IDAHO -LEWISTON, IDAHO - With temperatures soaring, Public Health - Idaho North Central District would like to remind people to do what they can to stay cool and prevent heat-related illness. Extreme heat, even for short periods of time, can lead to dehydration, heat exhaustion, or heat stroke.

Hot weather precautions to reduce the risk of heat exhaustion and heat stroke:

- Slow down. Avoid strenuous activity. If you must do strenuous activity, do it during the coolest part of the day, which is usually in the morning between 4:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m.
- Stay indoors as much as possible. If air conditioning is not available, stay on the lowest floor, out of the sunshine. Try to go to a public building with air conditioning each day for several hours. Remember, electric fans do not cool the air, but they do help sweat evaporate, which cools your body.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing. Light colors will reflect away some of the sun's energy.
- Drink plenty of fluids even if you do not feel thirsty.
- Water is the safest liquid to drink during heat emergencies. Avoid drinks with alcohol or caffeine in them. They can make you feel good briefly, but make the heat's effects on your body worse.
- Eat small meals and eat more often. Avoid foods that are high in protein, which increase metabolic heat.
- Avoid using salt tablets unless directed to do so by a physician.

The key to avoiding heat-related illness is to keep it light. Lighten your level of activity and exposure to the sun. Eat lighter meals and wear lightweight and light-colored clothing. But even the most careful people run into problems on hot days. If you or someone you're with starts to show the signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke, it is important to treat the symptoms immediately.

Symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

- Cool, moist, pale skin. The skin may or may not feel hot.
- Headache or dizziness
- Weakness or exhaustion
- Nausea

The signs of heat stroke include:

- High body temperature – sometimes as high as 105 degrees
- Skin may still be moist or the victim may stop sweating and the skin may be red, hot and dry
- Decreased alertness or loss of consciousness
- Rapid, weak pulse
- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Vomiting

Heat stroke is a serious illness. If the victim refuses water or demonstrates the symptoms of heat stroke, call 9-1-1 immediately. Heat stroke can be fatal if not properly treated.

The very young and the very old are the most vulnerable to heat-related illness. So check on those elderly neighbors and make sure everyone in the family stays cool and drinks lots of water; that includes toddlers and your pets.

For further information, please visit the Centers for Disease and Prevention website at

<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/>