# KEEPING COOL IN HOT WEATHER

## Keeping Safe During Hot Days And Heatwaves

This guidance describes the official advice for coping with hot weather. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), and Met Office issue similar advice shown below, and then we have added some additional things you can do.

## UK HEALTH SECURITY AGENCY

UKHSA issues the following guidance on how to keep safe in very hot weather. The UKHSA advice can be summarised as:

- Drink more,
- Stay out of the peak sun,
- Cool your body, and
- Keep your home shaded and ventilated at the right times.

KEEP YOUSELF COOL

- Stay out of the sun during the hottest hours (approx. 11am-3pm when the UV rays are strongest),
- Wear light clothing, use shade, and consider hats/sunscreen if you go outside,
- Avoid strenuous activity in the hottest periods,
- Cool your body with things like cool showers, damp cloths, or splashing cool water on yourself.

STAY HYDRATED

- Drink plenty of fluids regularly (don't wait until you are thirsty),
- Limit alcohol, which can dehydrate you,
- Take water with you when travelling.

KEEP YOUR HOME COOL

- Close curtains/blinds on sun-facing windows during the day,
- Keep windows closed when its hotter outside, then open them at night when it cools down if it's safe to do so,
- Reduce heat indoors. For example, limit use of appliances, check that fans and fridges are working properly.

LOOK AFTER OTHERS

- Check on vulnerable people including older adults, those with health conditions, and people living alone.
- Never leave anyone or pets in a parked car - even with an open window.

EXTRA SAFETY POINTS

- Watch for signs of heat exhaustion or heatstroke,
- Store medicines correctly as heat can affect them,
- Follow local safety advice if cooling off in water.

## ADDITIONAL ADVICE FROM THE UK MET OFFICE

- Keep up to date with the latest weather forecast and any extreme heat warnings.
- If you must go outside in the hottest parts of the day, try and walk in the shade as much as possible, apply sunscreen and wear a wide-brimmed hat.

## MORE TIPS TO KEEP YOUR HOUSE COOL

Houses in the UK are designed to keep heat in making them difficult to adjust for hot weather. But there are things you can do that will help to keep you cool:

- Check that your heating is turned off.
- To reduce heat generated in the home, turn off lights and electrical equipment that are not in use and consider cooking at cooler times of the day.
- If possible, shade windows with external blinds or shutters, and close the windows, curtains and internal blinds on the sun-facing windows.
- Use electric fans if the air temperature is below 35°C, but do not aim the fan directly at your body as this can lead to dehydration.

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- When the air outside feels cooler for example at night of early morning, open windows to get the air flowing through the home, but only if it is safe to do so. Do not put yourself at risk from intruders.
- If possible, move to a cooler part of the home, especially for sleeping.
- If you cannot keep cool in your home, remove yourself to a place that is cooler such as a public building (place of worship, local library, or supermarket) but only if you can travel safely.

## MORE TIPS TO KEEP YOURSELF COOL

- Keep your hydration up but avoid too much caffeine and alcohol since they can dehydrate you.
- Misting yourself with a light mist of cold water can help to keep you cool as the water evaporates on your skin taking heat with it.
- A wet tea-towel placed in front of a fan can also help lower the room temperature.
- If you are very hot take a cool shower.
- Just running your wrists under cold water can bring down your temperature quickly.
- Wear light-coloured loose-fitting and thin lightweight weave cotton clothing if possible. Cotton is breathable and absorbs sweat well.
- Sleeping can be tricky. Light bedding or even removing duvets and blankets and only covering yourself with a sheet can help you sleep whilst some people find it helpful to chill a pillowcase or use a hot water bottle filled with cold water placed in the bed before they retire.
- Hot heavy meals can raise your body temperature, so lighter options, such as salads, of food with a high-water content, are easier to digest.

## SIGNS OF HEAT EXHAUSTION

Be aware of the signs of heat exhaustion which can include:

- Dizziness,
- Headaches,
- Excessive Sweating, or
- Nausea.

At the first sign of trouble cool down as much as you can and rehydrate quickly using the tips above.

**Should the symptoms persist or get worse call the NHS 111 line for advice.**
**DO NOT LEAVE IT UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE.**

*This Guidance is brought to you by the Future Flood Resilience Group and the Vale of White Horse District Council Climate Action Fund.*

Vale of White Horse District Council

**DISCLAIMER**

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