



The summer months can be uncomfortable, but during California's energy crisis the situation could become life threatening. If you have very young, elderly or other vulnerable people living with or near you, following these simple guidelines could make the critical difference. The Alameda County Public Health Department is encouraging advance preparations now so that we all may have a healthy and safe summer.

PREPARING FOR A HEAT WAVE

- ✓ Keep a battery-powered radio, clock, flashlights, and extra batteries for power outages.
- ✓ Store at least one gallon of water per person, per day.
- ✓ Check with your doctor if you are on a fluid-restricted diet.
- ✓ Keep easy-to-prepare, nonperishable foods available (packaged snacks, fruits, water and juices).
- ✓ Set up a "BUDDY" system where family, friends or others can check on each other via phone or visits.
- ✓ Do "check ins" before, during and after the hottest part of the day.
- ✓ Keep essential medicines and prescription information and a small first aid kit available.
- ✓ Know the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of your doctors and pharmacists.
- ✓ A whistle or hand-held alarm can alert someone if you need help.

SEEKING RELIEF FROM THE HEAT

The following buildings may provide air-conditioned refuge during the warmest part of the day.

- ⇒ Libraries
- ⇒ Senior Centers
- ⇒ Community Centers
- ⇒ Movie Theaters
- ⇒ Shopping Malls
- ⇒ Places of Worship
- ⇒ Grocery Stores

Please call 9-1-1 for any serious heat related medical conditions!

For more information or advice on heat emergencies contact your local Office of Emergency Services, or:

- Alameda County Office of Emergency Services (OES) (925) 803-7800
- Alameda County Public Health Department—EMS Agency (510) 618-2050
Website: www.acgov.org - click on "department" then "EMS" e-mail: alcoems@co.alameda.ca.us

This flyer is the result of a collaboration between the following agencies:

- Alameda County Emergency Medical Services Agency
- Alameda County Public Health Department
- Alameda County Office of Emergency Services
- Bay Area Emergency Preparedness Coalition
- City of Oakland Office of Emergency Services
- California Office of Emergency Services
- Collaborating Agencies Responding to Disasters



HEAT WAVE

Are you Prepared?

Tips for you and your family to be better prepared to deal with the inevitable heat of summer



Prepared by:

The Alameda County

Public Health Department - Emergency Medical Services Agency

RECOGNIZING AND TREATING HEAT ILLNESS

The heat of summer is nothing new to humans, and we have developed an amazing ability to deal with this thermal challenge. The normal human response to heat is to sweat and increase the blood flow to our skin. Air moving over our moist skin (a breeze for example) allows for evaporative cooling to take place which is critical in maintaining a normal body temperature. This can be supported with increased fluid intake, minimizing activity and being in a well-ventilated area. It is also important to eat regularly as our body gets essential calories and electrolytes (important salts needed to maintain normal body function).



Heat illness can affect anyone, however, the very young, elderly, physically impaired, obese, and those taking certain medicines are at even higher risk. Specific medications such as diuretics, anti-depressants and blood pressure medicine can alter the body's normal response to heat. Consult with your doctor on this very important issue. Do not change your medication schedule without your physician's advice.

The following chart is a summary of the more common heat illnesses.

Please do not hesitate to call 9-1-1 if any heat related problem seems serious. Heat stroke kills!

PROBLEM	CAUSE	SIGNS & SYMPTOMS	TREATMENT
Heat Cramps (sore)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overworked muscles Dehydration (lack of water) Low electrolytes fatigue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Painful muscle spasms Muscles cramps (Usually calves, thighs and shoulders) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rest Hydration with commercially available electrolyte solutions (e.g. Gatorade) Stretching and massaging the affected muscles
Heat Exhaustion (sick)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low fluid intake Fluid and electrolyte losses through sweating Excessive activity often a contributing factor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weakness—feeling sick Lightheaded (especially while standing up) Nausea, vomiting Headache Skin moist, may be “cool and clammy” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get out of the hot environment Stop activity Cool down—rest Replace fluids and electrolytes (sips) Prevent recurrence Consider calling 9-1-1 or get medical attention
Heat Stroke (serious/life threatening)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Body cooling system overwhelmed Severe dehydration and/or excessive activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Severely altered mental status (confused, lethargic, disoriented, combative) Possibly unconscious Seizures are common Hot skin (may be moist or dry) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CALL 9-1-1, GET HELP Cool the person down with whatever means available (pour cool water over them, remove clothing, fan them, put ice packs at groin and armpits) Repeat if necessary

DURING A HEAT WAVE

- ✓ Avoid direct sun and heat.
- ✓ Minimize activity during the hottest part of the day, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.
- ✓ Stay cool in an area with air-conditioning or an electric fan.
- ✓ Drink water and other fluids throughout the day and evening.
- ✓ Avoid caffeine, sugar & alcohol.
- ✓ Do not leave people or pets alone in parked cars even for a short period of time.
- ✓ Wear light-colored, lightweight, loose fitting clothing.
- ✓ Eat small meals. Avoid fats and proteins. Avoid cooking if possible.
- ✓ Close blinds, drapes, doors and windows to keep the heat out during the day.
- ✓ Open windows and doors only if it is cooler outside than in.
- ✓ Keep electric lights turned down or off. They generate heat.
- ✓ If you have a baby, be aware of heat risks. Consider a cool (not cold) water bath.
- ✓ Listen to radio or watch TV for heat wave reports.
- ✓ Apply cool damp towels to wrists and back of neck. Sit in front of a fan to increase evaporation.

