

How to stay safe in a heatwave

A **heatwave** is when it's hotter than usual for three days or more. Hot weather caused by a heatwave can make you sick.

Here are some ways you can stay safe



Keep updated: Watch the news or visit weather websites, like the Bureau of Meteorology.



Store essentials: Have cold packs and spray bottles ready. You can buy these from supermarkets.



Stay connected: Know who to call if you need help. Talk to your family and friends.



Store items safely: Keep food and medicine in cool places like your pantry or fridge.



Stay cool: Make sure fans or air-conditioners work. Find a cool place, like a library, to go if you don't have them.



Get health advice: Talk to your doctor about staying cool during hot weather, especially if you have health issues or if you cannot drink lots of water.



In case you lose power or electricity: Have a torch, a charged phone, a battery-operated radio, and extra batteries.



During a heatwave

Eat and drink regularly



Drink water (2 to 3 litres per day which is 8 glasses).



Avoid alcohol, coffee, and sugary drinks.



Eat small meals often.

Keep your body cool and safe



At home: stay in the coolest part of your home and close the curtains.



Look for shade, wear a hat, sunscreen, sunglasses and loose clothing with long sleeves.



Never leave anyone, or animals, in a parked car.



Check in on older people and others in danger.

The types and signs of heat-related illness and what to do

Heat-related illness happens when your body cannot cool itself down. Different people show different signs of heat-related illness.

Dehydration



What it is: When your body loses more water than you drink.

What it does to you: Our bodies need water to work. Without enough water, we can feel sick.

Signs of illness: Feeling dizzy, tired, irritable, very thirsty, not hungry, bright, or dark urine.

What you can do: Drink water and rest in a cool place.

Heat cramps



What it is: Muscle pain or cramps, often after heavy exercise in very hot weather.

What it does to you: Your body is having trouble with the heat and needs to cool down.

Signs of illness: Sweaty with muscle pains.

What you can do: Drink water, rest in a cool place and massage muscles.

Heat exhaustion



What it is: An illness from being in hot weather for a long time. You might feel very tired, dizzy, or nauseous and sweat a lot.

What it does to you: If you don't get help, it can get worse and become heat stroke.

Signs of illness: Sweating, feeling tired, headache, feeling dizzy, nauseous, vomiting, racing heart, quick breathing, muscle pain and fainting.

What you can do: Lay down in a cool place, sip water. Take a cold shower or put a cool cloth on your body and face. If you don't get better quickly, call your doctor or Triple Zero (000) immediately. Ask for an interpreter, if you need one.

Heat stroke



What it is: A very serious illness from being in very hot weather. Your body can't cool itself, so it overheats. You might feel confused, stop sweating, and faint.

What it does to you: This is a medical emergency. It can be dangerous if you don't get medical help quickly.

Signs of illness: Confused, uncoordinated slurred speech or struggling to talk, hot dry skin, fast breathing, racing heart, very tired, fainting, vomiting, diarrhoea and loss of consciousness.

What you can do: This is serious. Call Triple Zero (000) immediately. Ask for an interpreter, if you need one. If possible, move the person to a cool place help cool them down.

Who needs extra care in the heat



Older people, especially if they live alone.



People who drink a lot of alcohol or use drugs.



Babies and small children.



People who cannot move well or cannot tell you if they are hot.



Pregnant or breastfeeding women.



Outdoor workers or athletes.



People with certain health problems or on certain medicines.



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Website: www.health.qld.gov.au/heatsafe

Weather updates: www.bom.gov.au

If you or anyone else has signs of heatstroke: call **13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)** for advice from a qualified nurse, or visit your doctor.

In an emergency: Call **Triple Zero (000)**.



Ask for an interpreter, if you need one