



GLOBAL HEALTH PHARMACY

ASK YOUR GLOBAL HEALTH PHARMACIST

News from Global Health Pharmacy Education Center

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FUN IN THE SUN - OR DEFEAT IN THE HEAT?

Did you know that the number of hot days – and warm nights – is increasing? In the U.S.A., record high temperatures now outnumber record lows at least two to one. What can you do to protect yourself in a heat wave – or simply in the hot summer sun?

KNOW SIGNS OF TROUBLE

Heat cramps are an early sign that your body is suffering from heat – they're more likely with exercise or work. Along with muscle cramps, you may sweat heavily and feel very thirsty or fatigued.

Heat exhaustion can happen when you lose lots of fluids from heavy sweating. Other signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

- 1) Nausea and vomiting (N&V)
- 2) Fast heartbeat
- 3) Headache
- 4) Dizziness
- 5) Feeling weak
- 6) Confused
- 7) Dark-colored urine (dehydration)
- 8) Cool, moist skin

If not treated, heat exhaustion can develop into heatstroke, which can be deadly because the body loses the ability to cool itself. Call 9-1-1 if someone shows signs of shock, becomes very confused, has a seizure, has a fever over 102 degrees F, breathes rapidly or has a rapid pulse, or loses consciousness.

NIP THE PROBLEM IN THE BUD

If you have symptoms of heat exhaustion, get out of the heat as quickly as you can. Rest in a cool, shady place with your feet raised. Drink plenty of fluids. Avoid alcohol or caffeine. Apply cool compresses or take a cool shower or bath. Contact a doctor if you don't feel better within 30 minutes.



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BEAT THE HEAT

- 1) Avoid taxing activities if you can
- 2) Stay indoors during the hottest hours of the day. The sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays are strongest between 10:00am and 4:00pm
- 3) If you don't have air conditioning, go to a library, mall, or other public place to cool down for a few hours.
- 4) Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing.
- 5) Avoid dark colors, which trap heat.
- 6) Use a hat or umbrella outdoors
- 7) Allow your car to cool off before you get in
- 8) Drink lots of water. Eat small meals often. Drink less alcohol and fewer caffeinated drinks
- 9) Don't take salt tablets unless your doctor tells you to.

PROTECT THOSE AT INCREASED RISK

Help protect those who are most vulnerable in the heat – children, older adults, obese people, ill, immunocompromised, exercise vigorously, or those who are not used to heat or high humidity. Make sure young ones drink plenty of water. Be a good Samaritan – check in on your elderly neighbors once in a while.

It's important to know that certain medicines can also increase your risk of heatstroke – Allergy medicines, Blood pressure medicines, seizure medicines, cancer medicines, mental health medicines as well as transplant medicines.

Talk to your Global health Pharmacist to make sure you stay safe and know the signs of problems. And if you have a chronic condition, it's a great idea to talk to your doctor about other ways to lower your risk of heatstroke.

Nothing herein constitutes medical advice, diagnosis or treatment, or is a substitute for professional advice. You should always seek the advice of your physician or other medical professional if you have questions or concerns about a medical condition.

References:

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