HEALTH ALERT

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SUMMER HEAT SAFETY

Summer is almost here, and Pennsylvania is already expected to experience extreme heat, and high temperatures are expected across Pennsylvania, on Thursday, June 11 and Friday, June 12, ranging from the mid-80s in the northwest and higher elevations to the mid-90s in the southeast. It is also expected to be very humid, with dewpoints of at least 70 in most areas and heat index values at or above 100 in the southeast. The National Weather Service (NWS) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) heat risk are in the major (red) and moderate (orange) categories on June 11 and June 12 throughout Pennsylvania.

The Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) is reissuing this Summer Heat Safety Health Alert as a reminder of the very serious nature of heat-related injuries. Stay mindful about heat related injuries all season. Extreme heat events, or heatwaves, are a leading cause of extreme weather-related deaths in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 700 people die yearly from extreme heat. If a person shows symptoms of heat stroke or is at risk and has heat exhaustion symptoms, then call 911.

HEAT ILLNESS CAN KILL. PREVENTION STRATEGIES AND RAPID RESPONSE ARE CRITICAL

The facts about extreme heat:

- Extreme heat causes more deaths than from hurricanes, lightning, tornadoes, floods, and earthquakes combined.
- Heat related injuries are preventable.
- Dehydration contributes to heat injury.
- Some people are more likely to get heat related injuries than others.

Know the Terms

Heat Advisory. Take Action! Issued within 12 hours of the onset of extremely dangerous heat conditions. Rule of thumb: the temperature is expected to be 100° or higher.

Excessive Heat *Watch*. Be Prepared! Issued when conditions are favorable for excessive heat in the next 24 to 72 hours. Take steps now to stay safe!

Excessive Heat *Warning*. Take Action! Rule of thumb: the temperature is expected to be 105° or higher for at least 2 days and night time air temperatures will not drop below 75°.

Who is at most risk for injury from extreme heat?

- People over 65 and under 5 years of age
- People with certain medical conditions or on certain medications like:
    - Heart disease, diabetes, obesity or high blood pressure
    - Medications for depression, insomnia, or poor circulation
- People that work or exercise outside

What are heat related illnesses?

- *Heat rash* is skin irritation caused by excessive sweating.
- *Heat cramps* are severe cramping of muscles because of dehydration usually while exercising in the heat.
- *Heat stroke* is a life-threatening emergency where the body temperature rises quickly. Symptoms include:
    - Hot, dry skin, high body temperature
    - Confusion, delirium, dizziness or loss of consciousness
    - Seizures or convulsions
    - Rapid pulse
- *Heat exhaustion* may precede heat stroke and includes cramps plus the following:
    - Pale sweaty skin
    - Weakness or fatigue
    - Headache, nausea, and/or dizziness
    - Fast, weak pulse and fast shallow breathing

What to do to prevent heat related injuries:

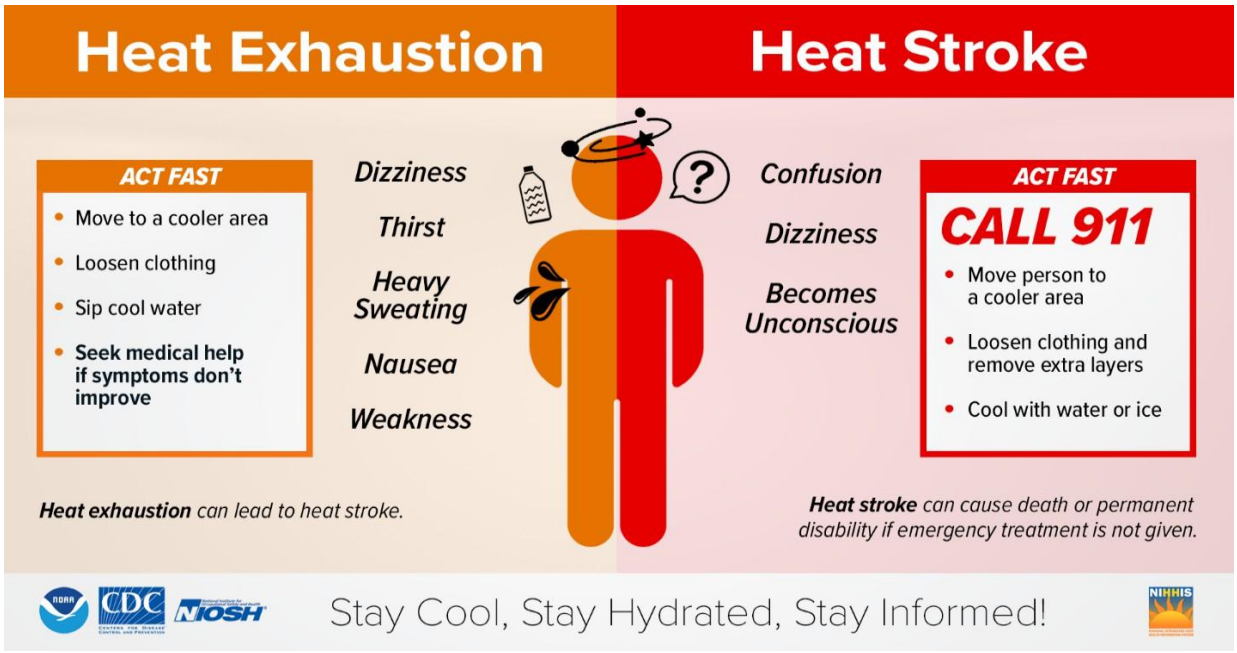
- Drink lots of fluids, especially water. Keep cold water with you whenever you are outside. Talk to your doctor about how much to drink if you must limit liquids.
- Don't drink a lot of fluids with caffeine or sugar in them as they can increase water loss.
- Don't drink alcohol in hot weather as it also can increase water loss.
- Be sure to replace salt either by eating some salty things or drinking some (not all) of your liquids as sports drinks. Talk to your doctor if you must limit salt.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- Limit outside activities to morning before noon and evening after 6 PM. Go at a slower pace and monitor yourself for signs of heat problems. STOP if you begin to develop difficulties and move to an air conditioned or shaded area.
- Stay indoors in air conditioning. If you don't have air conditioning, use a fan with the windows open and try to spend some time during the day in air conditioning such as at the library, mall, or a friend's house that has air conditioning.
- Never take a cool shower immediately after becoming overheated.
- Avoid using the oven or stove especially during the hottest parts of the day.
- Avoid hot foods and heavy meals. Eat more frequent, smaller meals.
- If working or exercising outside, work with another person and monitor each other for signs of heat problems. Try to stay in the shade as much as possible.
- Monitor people that are at high risk. Visit the people who are elderly or those that live alone and are at risk and watch them closely for signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

- ***NEVER* leave anyone in a parked vehicle, even with window open, for any amount of time in hot weather.**

What to do if you see any of the signs of heat exhaustion or stroke:

- Respond quickly to heat related symptoms. Move the person to a cooler area. If possible, move indoors into air conditioning, if not then move into the shade.
- Remove any heavy clothing.
- Cool the person with water either by using wet cloths or towels. Stay with the person. Don't leave them unsupervised.
- If the person shows mild symptoms of heat exhaustion, then give them fluids to drink. Do not do this if they are confused or lethargic.
- ***REMEMBER*, if a person shows symptoms of heat stroke or is at risk and has heat exhaustion symptoms, call 911.**

***** WHEN IN DOUBT, CALL 911. *****



Additional resources about Summer Heat Safety:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):	✓ CDC About Heat and Your Health ✓ Keep Your Cool in Hot Weather | Blogs | CDC ✓ Heat & Heat-related Illness | Tracking Program | CDC ✓ CDC Heat Guidance For Healthcare Professionals ✓ Protect Yourself From the Dangers of Extreme Heat | Climate and Health | CDC
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA):	✓ Extreme Heat | Ready.gov
American Red Cross (ARC):	✓ Extreme Heat Safety | Heat Exhaustion Safety | Red Cross
National Weather Service (NWS):	✓ https://www.weather.gov/ ✓ NWS and CDC HeatRisk Tool
Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH):	✓ Ready PA Extreme Heat ✓ PA DOH Heat-Related Illness ✓ PA DOH Extreme Heat Preparedness ✓ PA DOH Extreme Heat StoryMap

If you have additional questions about this guidance, please contact DOH at 1-877-PA-HEALTH (1-877-724-3258) or your local health department.

Note: The website for each above infographic is included in the Alt Text of the infographic.