



Health Services
Department of Developmental Services

SUMMER WEATHER SAFETY

Extreme heat can be dangerous.

***Temperatures of 78 degrees Fahrenheit or higher
put vulnerable populations at risk for heat related conditions.***

Know the signs. Stay safe and stay cool.

HEAT CRAMPS	HEAT EXHAUSTION	HEAT STROKE (Medical Emergency)
Heat cramps are painful muscle cramps that happen when you sweat too much. Clinical Signs and Symptoms • Heavy sweating • Painful muscle cramps or spasm (usually in the legs, arms or stomach) • Tight or hard muscles • Muscle pain during or after activity in hot weather	A heat related illness that happens when the body loses too much water and salt from heavy sweating. Clinical Signs and Symptoms • Heavy sweating • Thirst • Fast or weak pulse • Cold, pale and clammy skin • Weakness or fatigue • Nausea or vomiting • Headache, dizziness or lightheadedness • Decreased urine output	A dangerous condition where the body can no longer control its temperature, causing it to rise very quickly sometimes to 106 °F or higher. Clinical Signs and Symptoms • High body temperature (higher than 103 °F) • Confusion or altered mental status • Hot skin (stopped sweating or profusely sweating) • Rapid heartbeat • Fainting or seizures • Throbbing headache

WHO IS AT HIGHER RISK?

- People with chronic health problems such as but not limited to diabetes, asthma and heart disease
- Older adults
- People with disabilities
- People who have trouble moving around
- People who may not be able to say when they feel uncomfortable or too hot

PREVENTION AND SAFETY

- Assist people to drink plenty of water and fluids throughout the day. Don't wait until people are thirsty to drink.
 - Sports drinks may be helpful in providing electrolytes. Energy drinks may contain caffeine which can be dehydrating so look at ingredients.
 - If someone is on a fluid restriction, ask the health care provider who writes that order if that should change in hot weather.
 - Follow the prescribed dining protocol, including any required thickened liquids.
- Watch people who are at higher risk more closely.
- Consider going outdoors when the temperatures are cooler, like in the early morning.
- Make sure there is access to cool places, like air conditioning or shade. Stay in air-conditioned buildings as much as possible. Don't rely on a fan as the main cooling source when it's hot.
- Slow down or reduce activity during very hot weather.
- Take cool showers or baths to cool down.
- Look for early signs of heat illness and act right away.
- Wear loose and light-weight clothing.
- Never leave anyone in a parked car. Heat builds up fast and can be deadly.
- Consult the individual's health care provider promptly if there are medical heat-related concerns.



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WHAT TO DO

If you suspect HEAT CRAMPS	If you suspect HEAT EXHAUSTION	If you suspect HEAT STROKE
• Have them drink water, clear juice, or a sport drink. If concerned about electrolytes, provide salty snacks while providing fluids. • Have the person stop what they are doing and move to a cool place. • Wait until the cramps are gone before they start being active again. • <u>Get Medical help if:</u> ✓ The person's symptoms are getting worse. ✓ The person has low sodium, heart problems, high blood pressure, asthma or diabetes.	• Move the person to a cool place • Help cool them down using cool cloths, water, or a fan • Have them drink water in small, frequent sips • Remove or loosen tight or heavy clothing. • <u>Get Medical help if:</u> ✓ The person is getting worse. ✓ The person is throwing up. ✓ The person has heart problems, high blood pressure, or other health conditions like asthma or diabetes.	• <u>Call 911 right away – this is a medical emergency!</u> • Use cool, wet towels or cooling packs on the neck, or pour cool water on the person. • If the person is vomiting, turn them on their side to keep their airway open. • If the person is having a seizure, move nearby objects away to prevent injury. • Stay with the person and keep watching them until emergency help arrives.

For additional information please visit:

[Extreme Heat | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/extreme-heat)

[Heat Related Illnesses | CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov/heat/index.html)

[Massachusetts Unhealthy Heat Forecast | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-unhealthy-heat-forecast)

[Prevent and treat heat-related illness | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/prevent-and-treat-heat-related-illness)

[Preparing for Extreme Heat | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/preparing-for-extreme-heat)

[Keeping Cool | CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov/heat/index.html)

Information on this Flyer is Based on Guidance from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.