

# heatwave

LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF AND  
OTHERS DURING HOT  
WEATHER – THE LATEST ADVICE



## 7 eat can e harmful to our health ke messages

- 1 In one hot spell in August 2003 in England, deaths in those aged 75 and over rose by 60%, with approximately 2000 total extra deaths than would normally be expected.
- 2 Those with heart, respiratory and serious health problems are more at risk and the heat can make these conditions worse. Babies and young children are also especially at risk.
- 3 Many prescription medicines can reduce your tolerance of heat. You should keep taking your medicines, but take extra care to keep cool.
- 4 Danger symptoms to watch out for in hot weather include: feeling faint and dizzy, short of breath, vomiting or increasing confusion.
- 5 Take immediate action if danger symptoms of heatstroke are present:
  - Cool down as quickly as possible (see the advice on page 3).
  - Do not take aspirin or paracetamol – this can make you worse. Please note: do carry on taking all other prescribed medicines.
  - Seek further advice from NHS Direct, a doctor, or ring 999 if the person has collapsed.

## o tips for keeping cool

It is best for your health to avoid getting too hot in the first place. Remember to think of those who are more at risk from the effects of heat. Below are some tips to keep yourself and others cool:

- Keep windows closed when the room is cooler than it is outside. Open windows at night when the temperature outside has dropped. Open windows and ask for help if you are feeling unwell, especially if you are elderly, have a chronic condition, or are on medication. If you are feeling unwell, contact your GP or a health professional for advice.

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Remember heatstroke can kill. It can even be  
fatal. If you suspect someone has heatstroke call  
the NHS immediately.

## 7.1 Helping others





- If anyone you know is likely to be at risk during a heatwave (see the list on page 4), help them get the advice and support they need. Older people living on their own should be visited daily to check they are OK.

## 7.2 Helping someone waiting for the ambulance



- If possible, move the person somewhere cooler.
- Increase ventilation by opening windows or using a fan.
- Cool them down as quickly as possible by loosening their clothes, sprinkling them with cold water or wrapping them in a damp sheet.
- If they are conscious, give them water or fruit juice to drink.
- Do not give them aspirin or paracetamol.

If you want more information about hot weather and  
your health please visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk). If you are concerned  
about your health or someone you care for please  
contact • 7 • direct on  [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) or your  
local pharmacist or .

## Further information



- Check the weather forecast and any high temperature health warnings at [www.metoffice.gov.uk](http://www.metoffice.gov.uk)
- For further information about how to protect your health during a heatwave visit NHS Choices at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)
- Contact NHS Direct on  or NHS Choices at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) for advice about heat exhaustion and heatstroke.
- You can get advice on protecting your skin during hot weather from the Cancer Research UK SunSmart campaign website at [www.sunsmart.org.uk](http://www.sunsmart.org.uk)



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301454 4ap Jul10 (402600)

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