



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

# PLAINVILLE-SOUTHINGTON REGIONAL HEALTH DISTRICT

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With the upcoming heat wave, the Plainville-Southington Regional Health District would like to remind residents of the dangers associated with excessive heat and offer tips on staying safe in the heat. As the hot weather approaches us, it is important we take certain precautions in order to prevent serious heat-related illness or even death. Healthy people of any age can experience heat-related illness such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke when their bodies are unable to handle the high temperatures. Those at greatest risk are people over 65, infants and young children, and those with heart disease, high blood pressure, breathing problems or other chronic conditions. Here are some tips on how to avoid heat-related health problems this summer:

- Air-conditioning is the number one protective factor against heat-related illness and death. During conditions of extreme heat, spend time in locations with air-conditioning such as the Southington or Plainville Public Library, the Calendar House in Southington or large stores and shopping malls. The Libraries and Calendar House will be available during their normal scheduled hours of operations.
- Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of fluids, even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid drinks with caffeine, alcohol or too much sugar because they can cause you to lose excessive fluids from the body.
- Wear loose-fitting, lightweight, light-colored clothing. Wear a hat. Avoid dark colors because they absorb the sun's rays.
- Wear sunscreen and lip balm with SPF 15 or higher. Apply the sunscreen at least 30 minutes before going outside.
- Slow down, stay indoors and avoid strenuous exercise during the hottest part of the day. Postpone outdoor games and activities.
- Take frequent breaks if you must work outdoors, and use a buddy system when working in excessive heat.
- Check on family, friends and neighbors who do not have air conditioning, who spend much of their time alone or who are more likely to be affected by the heat.

- Never leave children or pets alone in enclosed vehicles. Check on your animals frequently to ensure that they are not suffering from the heat.
- Symptoms of heat exhaustion include pale and clammy skin, heavy perspiration, dizziness, weakness, headache or cramps, nausea and fainting. Seek medical attention immediately if the symptoms are severe or the victim has a history of heart problems or high blood pressure. Otherwise help the victim cool off and seek medical attention if symptoms worsen or last longer than an hour.
- Symptoms of heat stroke, which can be caused by over-exposure to direct sunlight, are high body temperature, skin that is red and dry, rapid pulse, and loss of consciousness. Heat stroke can lead to death if untreated. An individual with any of these symptoms should seek immediate medical attention.

If you have any questions, please contact the Plainville-Southington Health District at 860-276-6275.