

Staying **cool** in a heatwave

How to stay safe when it's hot





High temperatures and humidity can be a health risk – especially as we get older. Here are some helpful tips for staying safe during hot weather.

When you're out and about

- Avoid spending time outside or exercising during the hottest part of the day (between 11am and 3pm). Where possible, try to keep in the shade.
- Wear a sun hat and carry a bottle of water with you.
- Wear light-coloured, lightweight cotton clothing.
- Keep an eye on the weather forecast.
- Apply suncream, even when it's cloudy. You should use at least SPF 30 and apply it regularly. Make sure you don't miss any spots – it can be easy to forget bald patches, for instance.
- Talk to your optician about prescription sunglasses. Make sure any sunglasses you wear have a CE mark and UV400 label.

When you're at home

- Keep blinds down and windows closed when it's cooler inside.
- Most medication should be kept below 25°C – so it can be best to keep it in the fridge when it's really hot.
- Check your skin for changes every few months. If you notice that a mole has changed colour or shape or has been bleeding, talk to your doctor.
- Drink plenty to avoid getting dehydrated and keep eating even if you're not feeling too hungry. It can be best to avoid alcohol.

If you get too hot

- A damp cloth or a splash of water on the back of your neck can be better at cooling you down than a fan.
- Watch out for signs of dehydration, such as confusion, cramps, dark urine and feeling tired. You don't have to feel thirsty to be dehydrated.
- Be careful of heat exhaustion – symptoms include headaches, dizziness, nausea and a fast pulse. If you feel ill, lie down in a cool room, drink plenty of fluids, and cool yourself with a splash of water. Call your local pharmacist or **111** for advice.
- Heat exhaustion can lead to heatstroke. Symptoms include falling unconscious and seizures. Call **999** immediately if you think you or someone else might have heatstroke.
- If you know it's going to be particularly hot, ask someone to check on you. In turn, check on others you think might need it.

What should I do now?

You might want to read some of our relevant information guides and factsheets, such as:

- **Healthy living**
- **Staying safe**

You can find all of our guides and factsheets on our website, along with lots more useful information. Visit **www.ageuk.org.uk** to get started.

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