



FACT SHEET

Heat and Your Health

A heat wave can be any period of one or more days when the weather is hotter than usual. Here in the Northwest, that usually means three or more days when it is 90°F or higher. Planning before a heat wave is important to ensure that you stay healthy. Staying cool, staying hydrated and staying informed can keep you safe and healthy. You and your neighbors should check on each other, too.

Before a heat wave

Know your risks.

Hot temperatures can be dangerous, especially if you:

- Are a young child
- Are 65 or older
- Have a chronic illness such as heart disease, high blood pressure, Parkinson's disease or mental health concerns
- Are overweight
- Work outdoors
- Are an athlete
- Have a low income

Plan to protect yourself and others.

- Check weather reports on TV, radio, online or in a local newspaper.
- If you have an air conditioner, make sure it is installed and it works.



- Know where you can go to cool off during a heat wave (e.g., libraries, community centers, cooling shelters and shopping centers).

- You may need to consider storing your medication in a cooler place during a heat event. Make sure you consult with your pharmacist.
- Ask neighbors, friends and family about their plans to stay cool.



During a heat wave

Stay cool.

- Stay in air-conditioned buildings.
- Avoid relying on a fan as your main cooling device.
- Limit outdoor activity, especially in the afternoon.
- Avoid direct sunlight.
- Be sure to apply sunscreen 20 minutes prior to going outdoors and continue to reapply according to the package directions.
- Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- Take cool showers or baths.
- Never leave people — especially children — or pets in a parked car.
- Check on at-risk friends, family and neighbors at least twice a day.





Stay hydrated.

- Drink more water than usual. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink.
- Drink two to four cups of water every hour while working or exercising outside.
- Avoid alcohol or liquids with high amounts of sugar.
- Make sure your family, friends and neighbors drink enough water.

Stay informed.

- Check your local news for extreme heat warnings and safety tips.
- Be informed of the Air Quality Health Index. When it is high, reschedule outdoor activities or move them indoors.
- Learn about the warning signs of heat-related illness and what first aid to use.



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