

ADULT HEALTH BULLETIN



AUGUST 2025

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC

PREVENTING HEATSTROKE IN THE "DOG DAYS" OF SUMMER



The "dog days of summer" are the hottest and most humid days of the year, usually in July and early August. The term comes from ancient times. People noticed that this period of very hot weather happened around the time the star Sirius, also called the Dog Star, rose in the sky with the sun. People believed that the heat came from this star shining so brightly. Today, we know it's just the time of year when our part of the earth is closest to the sun because of the earth's tilt. During the dog days of summer, it's especially important to be aware of the health risks of extreme heat, including heatstroke.

Heatstroke is a serious illness that happens when your body gets too hot and cannot cool down. It usually happens after spending too

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you can do is drink
plenty of water,
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to protect yourself
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much time in the sun or doing hard physical activity in very hot weather. When someone has heatstroke, their body temperature can rise to 104 degrees F (40 degrees C) or higher. This can be very dangerous because it can damage the brain and other organs. Common signs of heatstroke include a high body temperature, red or dry skin, fast heartbeat, confusion, headache, or even fainting. It is important to treat heatstroke quickly by moving the person to a cooler place, using cool water to lower their temperature, and calling for medical help right away. Heatstroke can be life-threatening if not treated in time.

A regular stroke and a heatstroke are two very different medical problems, even though they both have the word “stroke” in their names. A regular stroke happens when blood flow to the brain is blocked or a blood vessel in the brain bursts. This can damage parts of the brain. That can cause problems like trouble speaking, weakness on one side of the body, or confusion. It is a brain-related emergency. On the other hand, heatstroke happens in the body. Heatstroke affects the whole body and can damage organs, including the brain. Both conditions are serious and need medical

help right away. But they are caused by different things and affect the body in various ways.

To avoid heatstroke, it's important to stay cool and hydrated, especially when the weather is very hot. One of the best things you can do is drink plenty of water, even if you don't feel thirsty. Wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothes and a hat to protect yourself from the sun. Try to stay in the shade or indoors with air conditioning during the hottest parts of the day, usually between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

If you have to be outside or do physical activity, take lots of breaks and rest in a cool place. Never sit in a parked car on a hot day, as the heat in enclosed areas can increase quickly to dangerous levels. By following these steps, you can help protect yourself from heatstroke and stay safe in hot weather.

REFERENCE:

<https://www.cdc.gov/heat-health/about>

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