

Expert tips to help you beat the heat

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(HealthDay)—With much of the United States blanketed by a heat wave this week, the American Red Cross offers some survival tips.

Each year, extreme heat kills more than 600 people in the United States. And many others are at risk of heat-related illness, especially adults aged 65 and older and those with [chronic medical conditions](#), the Red Cross noted in a news release.

Electric fans may provide some cooling, but might not provide enough protection when the temperature is in the high 90s. You should take a cool shower or bath, or go to an air-conditioned place to cool off.

The organization also suggests that you:

- Wear loose-fitting, lightweight and light-colored clothing. Drink plenty of fluids, but avoid drinks with caffeine or alcohol.
- Check on family, friends and neighbors who have no air conditioning, spend much of their time alone, or are likely to be

affected by the heat.

- Never leave children or pets in your vehicle, not even for a minute. The inside temperature of the car can quickly reach 120 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Check your local news for extreme heat alerts and to find cooling shelters in your area. Slow down, stay indoors and avoid strenuous exercise during the hottest part of the day. Postpone outdoor games and activities. Check on animals frequently, and make sure they have plenty of shade and [cool water](#).
- When working in extreme heat, take frequent breaks, monitor the condition of your co-workers, and have someone do the same for you.
- Keep tabs on those at greatest risk for heat-related illness. Besides the elderly, these include infants and young children, overweight people and those who "overexert" during work or exercise. Also at greater risk are people who are physically ill, especially if they have [heart disease](#) or [high blood pressure](#), or take certain medications for depression, insomnia or poor circulation.

The Red Cross advises visiting at-risk adults at least twice a day. Infants and young children need much more frequent monitoring.

If you don't have air conditioning, seek relief in public facilities that have it. And if you do go to a public facility to stay cool, follow coronavirus pandemic precautions: Wear a cloth face covering and maintain social distancing.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers more [hot weather safety tips](#).

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