



## Natural Disasters and Severe Weather

# Heat and Older Adults



People aged 65 years or older are more prone to heat-related health problems. If you're an older adult or a caretaker, review this page for information on how you or the person you're caring for can stay safe during the heat.

### Why are older adults more prone to heat stress?

#### CARETAKER CHECKLIST

Keep a close eye on those in your care by visiting them at least twice a day, and ask yourself these questions:

- Are they drinking enough water?
- Do they have access to air conditioning?
- Do they know how to keep cool?
- Do they show any signs of heat stress?

- Older adults do not adjust as well as young people to sudden changes in temperature.
- They are more likely to have a chronic medical condition that changes normal body responses to heat.
- They are more likely to take prescription medicines that affect the body's ability to control its temperature or sweat.

### Stay cool, stay hydrated

- Stay in air-conditioned buildings as much as possible. If your home doesn't have air conditioning, contact your local health department or locate an air-conditioned shelter in your area.
- Do not rely on a fan as your main cooling source when it's really hot outside.
- Drink more water than usual and **don't wait** until you're thirsty to drink.
  - If your doctor limits the amount of fluids you drink or has you on water pills, ask them how much you should drink during hot weather.
- Don't use the stove or oven to cook—it will make you and your house hotter.
- Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- Take cool showers or baths to cool down.
- Do not engage in very strenuous activities and get plenty of rest.
- Check on a friend or neighbor and have someone do the same for you.
- Follow [additional tips](#) on how to prevent heat-related illness.

## Stay informed

- Check the local news for health and safety updates.
- **Seek medical care immediately** if you have, or someone you know has, [symptoms of heat-related illness](#) like muscle cramps, headaches, nausea or vomiting.

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