

Below are some tips to keep yourself and others cool and what to do if someone feels unwell.

Stay out of the heat:

- Avoid the heat: stay out of the sun and don't go out between 11am and 3pm (the hottest part of the day) especially if you're vulnerable to the effects of heat
- Take a bottle of water with you when out and about and especially when travelling by car or public transport
- Wear loose, light coloured, cotton clothing, and a hat if you do go outdoors
- Spend time in the shade and avoid strenuous physical activity
- Plan ahead so that you don't have to go out in extreme heat by making sure you have enough supplies, of food, water and any medications you need. Ask a friend or relative to help you stock up if you're vulnerable to the effects of heat.
- Stay tuned to the weather forecast on the radio or TV, or at the Met Office website.

Cool yourself down:

- Have cool baths or showers, and splash yourself with cool (but not very cold) water, or place a damp cloth on the back of your neck to cool down
- Drink cold drinks regularly, such as water and fruit juice, even if you're not thirsty. Try to avoid tea, coffee and alcohol
- Eat normally even though you may not be as hungry, you need a normal diet to replace salt losses from sweating. Try to have more cold foods, such as salads and fruit, as these contain a lot of water

Keep your environment cool:

- Turn off non-essential lights and electrical equipment – they generate heat.
- Identify the coolest room in the house so you know where to go to keep cool. Try to sleep in the coolest room too.
- Shut windows and pull down the shades when it is hotter outside. If it's safe, open them for ventilation when it is cooler
- Keep rooms cool by keeping curtains closed while it's hot outside (use light-coloured curtains if possible, as metallic blinds and dark curtains can make the room hotter)
- Electric fans may provide some relief, however at temperatures above 35°C they may cause dehydration. The advice is not to aim the fan directly on the body and to have regular drinks.

Look out for others:

- Check up on friends, relatives and neighbours who may be less able to look after

themselves every day during a heatwave. Make sure they have supplies of food, water and their normal medication.

- Ensure that babies, children or elderly people are not left alone in stationary cars.
- Seek advice if you have any concerns:
- People with heart problems, breathing difficulties or serious illnesses may find their symptoms become worse in hot weather, so make sure you have enough medicines in stock and take extra care to keep cool. Contact your GP if your symptoms become worse.
- Contact your doctor, a pharmacist or NHS 111 if you are worried about your health or someone else's health during a heatwave, especially if you are taking medication, if you feel unwell or have any unusual symptoms.

Take extra care with food in hot weather:

When it's hot, bacteria on food can multiply very quickly, which increases the risk of food poisoning. So, it's important to make sure food is:

- kept in cooler bags when taking it home from the supermarket or out for a picnic
- not left in hot cars and put in the fridge as soon as you get home – the temperature of the fridge should be between 0 and 5 degrees Celsius
- kept out of the sun
- only out of the fridge for the shortest time possible – no more than a couple of hours

Take care with bins and waste

Bins and waste can attract flies and maggots and start to smell in the heat, so make sure you:

- move bins out of direct sunlight and keep their lids closed at all times
- double bag food waste and nappies and squeeze the air out of the top of the bags before you tie them
- clean bins with disinfectant after they have been emptied – you can pour boiling water over them to kill any maggots
- recycle as much as possible to reduce waste

For more information about bin and waste collection and recycling, contact your local council.

Looking after pets:

Your pets and other animals can also suffer heatstroke in hot weather if they don't keep cool.

Never leave animals inside a car on a hot day and make sure they have:

- plenty of clean, fresh water to drink
- a cool and shady place to rest

It's also important to cover pet food dishes to prevent flies laying eggs on the food.

Contact a vet if you are worried that an animal is suffering from heatstroke. More information about looking after dogs in hot weather is on the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) website.