

AUGUST 2008

HEAT WAVE AWARENESS MONTH

It Can Get Too Hot!



During an average summer, some 200 people across the country die due to heat injuries from exposure to high summer temperatures. Clearly, heat can be dangerous, particularly in Southern California, where temperatures exceeding 100 degrees in the suburban valleys and 110 degrees in the low desert areas are not uncommon in the summer. This bulletin offers recommendations designed to help you avoid heat-related death and injury wherever you live, work, or play.

- Avoid the sun from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. when the burning rays are strongest.
- Reduce physical activity. Wear a wide-brimmed hat and light colored, lightweight, loose-fitting clothes when you're outdoors. This type of clothing reflects heat and sunlight, which helps you maintain a normal body temperature
- Avoid hot, heavy meals that include proteins. They increase your metabolism and water loss, and raise your body's natural way of cooling.
- Set your air conditioning thermostat between 75 and 80 degrees. If you don't have an air conditioner, take a cool bath or shower twice a day and visit air-conditioned public spaces during the hottest hours of the day.
- Drink plenty of fluids even if you aren't thirsty. Eight to 10 glasses of water a day are recommended. Drink even more if you are exercising or working in hot weather.
- Do not drink alcohol or caffeine since they are diuretics (i.e., promote water loss).
- Use a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 15 if you need to go out in the sun.

✓ HEALTH TIP:

During a heat wave keep yourself cool at air-conditioned facilities like public libraries, malls, or community centers and check with your local Public Health Department for "cooling centers" in your community.

www.espfocus.org



**Get ready for the ShakeOut Drill: A public drill for all southern Californians on
November 13, at 10:00 a.m. www.ShakeOut.org**

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