



COLUMBUS
PUBLIC HEALTH



Tips to Stay Safe in Extreme Heat

Columbus Public Health and Franklin County Public Health offer the following tips to stay safe:

- Air-conditioning is the number one protective factor against heat-related illness and death. During conditions of extreme heat, spend time in locations with air-conditioning such as shopping malls or public libraries.
- Drink cool, nonalcoholic beverages and increase your fluid intake, regardless of your activity level. Water is your best option - do not wait until you are thirsty.
- During heavy exercise in a hot environment, be sure to drink two to four glasses (16-32 ounces) of cool fluids each hour.
- Use your stove and oven less to maintain a cooler temperature in your home. Eat light meals.
- Electric fans may provide comfort, but when the temperature is in the high 90s fans will not prevent heat-related illness. Taking a cool shower or bath or moving to an air-conditioned place is a much better way to cool off.
- Never leave infants, children or pets in a parked car, even if the windows are cracked open.
- Choose lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing and a hat.
- If you must be outdoors, try to limit your outdoor activity to morning and evening hours. Rest often in shady areas so that your body's thermostat will have a chance to recover.
- Be sure to think of your pets too. Provide plenty of fresh water, and leave the water in a shady area. Bring your pet indoors where it is cooler when you can. Never leave an animal in the car on hot days.

Your best defense against heat-related illness is prevention. Staying cool and making simple changes in your fluid intake, activities, and clothing during hot weather can help you remain safe and healthy.

Heat-related illnesses such as heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke can strike at any time. Symptoms include dizziness, nausea, rapid heartbeat, headache, absence of perspiration and dry, hot flushed skin. Anyone experiencing these symptoms should seek immediate medical attention.

Cooling assistance programs are available to qualifying people from several community organizations:

The Breathing Association and OhioHealth Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) – Summer Crisis Program, providing electric bill assistance and air conditioning units for elderly households and customers with qualifying incomes, medical conditions or disconnect notice June 1-July 31. Several locations are available to call for appointment. The main office is located at 1520 Old Henderson Rd, appointment contact 1-800-866-861-6399. The main office takes walk-ins Monday-Friday from 8:30-10:00 am. Appointments are on a first come first serve basis, and the first 25 individuals are accepted.

Contact the East location 566-0750. Any further questions can be directed to the main office 614-457-2997.

LifeCare Alliance – Free fan program for households with immediate family members with chronic health conditions. Before coming in, please be sure to contact 278-3130. If in need of a fan contact 437-2870. New box fans also can be donated for the program at any City of Columbus fire station. For more information, call Michelle Jones at 437-2803.

Impact Community Action – Summer Crisis Program providing energy bill assistance to households that meet income eligibility guidelines and have a member more than 60 years of age with certain medical conditions. For guidelines and appointments, call 866-747-1038.

Franklin County Senior Options – Free fan program for current clients ages 60 years or older without a working air conditioner. Limited number of fans available. (Clients who received a fan in the last two years are ineligible.) For more information, call 525-6200.

For more heat information please dial 2-1-1 and visit the Columbus Public Health website at www.publichealth.columbus.gov or Franklin County Public Health website at www.myfcph.org