



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

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WHEN THE HEAT IS ON, CHECK UP ON ELDERLY, DISABLED NEIGHBORS

Make Sure They're Cool and Keep Cool Yourself, Says County Health and Human Services Agency

With temperatures expected to peak in the 100s in desert areas this week, the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) reminds the public to be aware of the potential hazards of exposure to excessive heat.

"Seniors with limited mobility, the disabled and people who are ill, are especially vulnerable to high temperatures," said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. "Hot temperatures and high humidity increase the likelihood of heat illnesses, such as heat exhaustion or heat stroke. If they can't cool off at home, take them to a Cool Zone location, or mall or other air-conditioned location.

"Young children and pets are also susceptible to the effects of high heat."

HHS Aging and Independence Services' Cool Zone program offers 150 locations for anyone to beat the heat. Call toll free 1-800-510-2020 for information. A list of Cool Zone sites and tips for staying cool are on the County Web site --<http://www2.sdcounty.ca.gov/hhsa/ServiceDetails.asp?ServiceID=999>

The public is also reminded to **never** leave children or pets unattended in vehicles for any period of time, even with the windows down, as heat can rise to dangerous levels inside vehicles.

To beat the effects of high heat:

- Drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids
- Stay out of the sun
- Wear lightweight clothing
- Be cautious about engaging in strenuous physical activity during peak hours from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- Take a cool shower, bath or sponge bath
- Call your physician if you feel you may be experiencing heat-related illness.

Heat exhaustion, or heat stroke, can occur in people who have difficulty regulating their body temperature, including: Children up to age 4, those 65 or older, people who are overweight, and people ill or on certain medications. Heat exhaustion is marked by weakness, nausea, vomiting, headache and muscle aches. To treat heat exhaustion, cool the victim off quickly, and provide water or diluted sports drinks like Gatorade.

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Signs of heat stroke include: Lack of sweating, rapid pulse, headache, nausea, confusion, and even unconsciousness. If someone is suffering from heat stroke, call 9-1-1, loosen or remove the victim's clothing, and spray or pour water on their skin.

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