

Beat the Heat

How to Avoid Heat Stress

If you are older you are at more risk of severe heat stress and dehydration. The following advice will help you look after older people during a period of extreme heat.

Plan Ahead

- Check the weather reports on television and radio to plan ahead for hot days
- Ask a friend or family member to check on you twice a day during periods of hot weather, especially if you live alone
- Dress appropriately for hot weather in cool cotton clothes and wear a hat when outside
- Keep a glass of water or drink bottle handy
- Make sure you have a phone that will work during a power failure
- If you have a safety pendant, make sure this will also work during a power failure

Recognise the Signs

- Muscle cramps
- Pale skin
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Nausea (feeling sick)
- Increased heart rate
- Fainting
- Excessive sweating or no sweating with high temperature and hot, dry skin
- Urinating less often
- Confusion

What to do

- Rest in a cool, well ventilated area
- Remove excess clothing
- Drink plenty of water and fluids. Consider diluted juice (mixed with water) or low sugar sports drinks
- Apply cool wet cloths, cold water or ice packs (armpits and groin) to the skin. It is important to ensure that ice packs are covered with a cloth to avoid skin damage

Where to get help

If you have severe symptoms, always dial triple zero (000) to call an ambulance in a medical emergency

The following are severe heat stress indicators. Seek urgent medical advice if experiencing any of these symptoms:

- High body temperature
- Nausea
- Dry, red, hot skin
- Rapid heart rate

Call us on 1300 669 189 or email us at info@scrosswa.org.au for further details about how to assist an older person cope during a period of extreme heat.

