

# Staying cool in a heatwave



How to stay safe  
when it's hot



**High temperatures and humidity can present a risk to our health – especially as we get older. Here are some helpful tips on how to stay safe during hot weather.**

### **When you're out and about**

- Try to avoid spending too much time outside or exercising during the hottest part of the day (between 11am and 3pm). Try and keep in the shade when you can.
- Wear a sun hat and carry a bottle of water with you.
- Light-coloured, lightweight cotton clothing keeps you cooler.
- Keep an eye on the forecast for any hot weather warnings or unseasonably warm weather.
- Make sure you apply suncream. You should use at least SPF 15 and apply it regularly. Make sure you don't miss any spots – it can be easy to forget bald patches, for instance. UV levels can still be harmful when it's cloudy out, so be careful even when it's not sunny.
- Talk to your optician about prescription sunglasses. Make sure any sunglasses you wear have a CE mark and UV400 label.

## When you're at home

- Keep blinds down and windows closed when it's cooler inside than out.
- A damp cloth or a splash of water on the back of your neck can be better at cooling you down than a fan.
- Most medication should be kept below 25°C – so it might be best to keep it in the fridge when it's really hot.
- Check your skin every few months and keep an eye on any moles. If you notice any changes to their colour or shape, or if they bleed, don't hesitate to go and talk to your doctor.
- Drink plenty to avoid getting dehydrated, but avoid alcohol, and keep eating even if you're not feeling too hungry.

## If you get too hot

- Watch out for signs of dehydration, such as confusion, cramps, dark urine and feeling weak. You don't have to feel thirsty to be dehydrated.
- Be careful of heat exhaustion – the symptoms include headaches, dizziness, nausea and a fast pulse. If you feel unwell, lie down in a cool room, drink plenty of water, and cool yourself with a splash of water.
- Heat exhaustion could lead to heatstroke. Symptoms include falling unconscious and seizures. Call **999** immediately if you think you or someone else might have heatstroke.
- If you know it's going to be particularly hot and you think you might struggle, ask someone to check on you. Equally, check on others you think might struggle in the heat.

# What should I do now?

You may want to read some of our relevant information guides and factsheets, such as:

- **Healthy living**
- **Staying safe**

You can order any of our guides or factsheets by giving our Advice Line a ring for free on **0800 169 65 65** (8am-7pm, 365 days a year).

Our friendly advisers are there to help answer any questions.

All of our publications are available in large print and audio formats.

There's plenty of really useful information on our website, too. Visit **[www.ageuk.org.uk/wellbeing](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/wellbeing)** to get started.



**0800 169 65 65**  
**[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)**

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