

Caregiver Assistance News

“Caring for You - Caring for Others”

Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

*Serving Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike,
Ross, Scioto and Vinton Counties in Ohio*

www.aaa7.org **Helping You Age Better!**



JULY 2016

Extreme Hot Weather Safety

Heat is the leading weather-related killer in the United States—more than hurricanes, lightning, tornadoes, floods and earthquakes combined, even though most heat-related deaths are preventable through outreach and intervention. The risk of heat stroke among older adults is over 10 times that of younger people.

People suffer heat-related illness when their bodies are unable to properly cool themselves. In heat stroke, the body loses its ability to perspire and cannot cool itself. Body temperature can then rise as high as 106° Fahrenheit (41° Celsius) and can cause permanent disability or death. Heat exhaustion is less severe, and more common, and occurs when the body becomes severely dehydrated and, if left untreated, leads to heat stroke.



Tips to keep the person in your care, and you, hydrated and safe all summer:

- **Drink Fluids**—Even if not exercising, drinking plenty of water is the key to staying healthy in the summer. If the doctor limits fluid intake, make sure to ask how much to drink when it is hot.
- **Keep Drinks Cool, Not Cold**—Ice-cold drinks can be too cold for your body and may cause stomach cramps. Drink water that only feels cool to the touch.
- **Avoid Alcohol**—Alcoholic beverages are the worst things you can drink on a hot day. Alcohol only makes you more dehydrated.
- **Skip the Caffeine and Sugar**—Like alcohol, caffeine and sugar cause your body to lose fluids. This includes skipping soda, juices, coffee and tea.
- **Wear Loose Clothing**—A loose t-shirt and shorts or cotton dress will help air to circulate around your skin. This allows sweat to evaporate and cool your body.
- **Stay Out of the Sun**—This can mean either staying in the shade, or doing your exercise in the very early morning or late evening, when the sun isn't as strong.

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Extreme Heat (continued from Page 1)

- Wear a Hat, Sunglasses and Sunscreen—A wide-brimmed hat keeps the sun off your face, keeping it cooler. Also, don't allow yourself to sunburn—burned skin hampers your body's ability to cool off.
- Find a Cool Spot—If your head begins to pound and you have difficulty breathing, stop whatever you are doing. Find a shady spot and rest.
- Know the Symptoms—Symptoms of heat exhaustion include fatigue, weakness, nausea, vomiting, headache, dizziness, muscle cramps, and irritability. If you notice any of these symptoms while outside, take a break and drink water.
- Older Bodies Need More Water—As people age, they feel less thirsty, so they have to make a special effort to drink fluids. Fluid balance can be affected by medication, emotional stress, exercise, nourishment, general health, and the weather.

Keep Food Safe

Because of higher temperatures in the summer months, it's easier for bacteria to grow on food. Older people become sick easier from germs in food. Always wash your own hands and the hands of the person in your care with hot soapy water before preparing or serving food. Dry hands with a paper towel. Here are some additional tips:

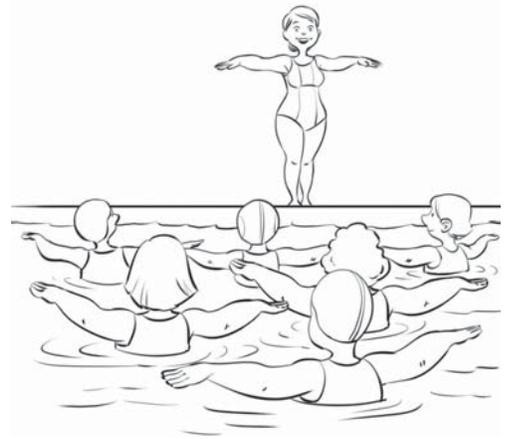
- Air drying dishes is more sanitary than using a dish towel.
- Discard all foods that are past the expiration date on the label.
- Never leave meats out at room temperature.
- Thoroughly cook all red meat and fish at 300°F or more.
- Cook hamburgers or chopped meat until the juices run clear.
- Keep cold foods cold and hot foods hot.
- Cook eggs until the yolks are no longer runny and never serve raw eggs in drinks.
- Never serve oysters, clams, or shellfish raw.
- Wash all fruits and vegetables thoroughly.
- Avoid unpasteurized milk and cider.
- Be careful if you use the microwave oven. Make sure the food has no cold spots that let germs live. Stir the food for even cooking.
- Bring sauces and gravies to a boil when you reheat them.



TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

Why You Need to Learn to Swim

Swimming is a skill that youngsters and adults should learn and do continuously. As a form of exercise, it keeps a healthy heart and helps maintain desirable weight. Aside from therapeutic benefits, swimming is an alternative exercise for people with injuries that prevent them from doing other physical activities. Reports show; however, that more than one-third of adults are not capable of swimming. Whether it is because of fear of water or embarrassment in trying, these adults miss out on a wonderful exercise. Adult swimming lessons are readily available at community pools. It only takes patience and commitment to learn.



Source: *New York Times*; *Well Blog*

Be Wary of Scams - Check the Charity Before You Give

Did you know that there is a website that uses a four-star system to rate charities based on their financial performance and accountability? It also shows how the charity ranks compared to others doing similar work.

Check out www.charitynavigator.org for more information.



Don't Fall - Be Safe!

Find Balance

The Area Agency on Aging offers "A Matter of Balance" falls management classes to help older adults manage falls and increase activity levels.

Call today to learn more about this award-winning program. **1-800-582-7277**



Community Wellness Classes

brought to you by the Area Agency on Aging District 7

Chronic Disease Self-Management • Diabetes Self-Management

A Matter of Balance Falls Prevention • Tools for Caregivers

Classes available throughout our ten-county district in 2016. Contact us to learn more about these **FREE** classes and when we will be in your area!

1-800-582-7277 or info@aaa7.org





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Safety Tips - *Signs of Heat Stroke*

July and August can be two of the hottest months of the year and a good time to offer reminders of how to stay cool during the summer months. Older adults are more prone to heat stress than younger individuals, so make sure to take the necessary precautions for yourself or someone in your care during the hot summer months. Make sure they are drinking enough water and have access to air conditioning or a cool shelter.

Here is some good information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov) concerning heat stroke and heat exhaustion and what you can do to protect yourself and others:

Signs and Symptoms of Heat Stroke Could Include:

- An extremely high body temperature (above 103°F)
- Red, hot, and dry skin (no sweating)
- Rapid, strong pulse
- Throbbing headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Confusion
- Unconsciousness

If you see any signs of severe heat stroke, you may be dealing with a life-threatening emergency. Have someone call for immediate medical assistance while you begin cooling the affected person.

