



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: 06/20/2016

CONTACT: Christina Harrington, MPH
TITLE: Emergency Preparedness Director
PHONE: (989) 758-3804
FAX: (989) 758-3897
EMAIL: charrington@saginawcounty.com

EXTREME HEAT SAFETY

With temperatures expected to climb this time of year, the Saginaw County Department of Public Health is advising residents of the health risks associated with extreme temperatures and preventive measures they can take to stay safe.

Any time temperatures are in the upper 80s and above, body temperature can rise resulting in muscle cramps, dizziness, severe heat illness and even death.

While extreme heat can put everyone at risk for heat illnesses, health risks are greatest for older adults, infants and young children, people with chronic illnesses, mental illness or heart conditions, people who work in the heat, people who exercise in the heat, the homeless, and low-income earners. Be sure to check frequently on loved ones, neighbors and friends who may be at greatest risk for heat illness and move them to a cool place if necessary.

Heat illness can occur when the body is unable to cool down. The body normally cools down by sweating. During extremely hot weather, sweating may not be enough to cool the body. That's when people can become overheated to the point of becoming ill.

Avoid heat illness. During very hot weather, the most important thing is to keep cool and hydrated. Follow these steps to protect yourself in hot weather:

- Stay cool. Use an air conditioner or go to a cool place such as a basement, neighbor's house, shopping mall or cooling center. Spending even a few hours a day in air conditioning can help reduce your risk for heat illness.
- Use a fan only when the windows are open or the air conditioner is on. Fans will not prevent heat illness when the temperature is in the high 90s.
- Take a cool shower or bath.
- Keep shades and curtains closed to block the sun from coming in your home or office.
- Avoid exercising and physical activity during the hottest part of the day. Mornings and evenings are usually cooler than mid-day.

- Stay out of the sun. If you must be in the sun, wear thin and light-colored clothing, a hat and sunglasses. Wear sunscreen (at least SPF15) and reapply every two hours, after swimming or exercising.
- Avoid alcohol and caffeine because both can cause dehydration.
- Never, ever leave children, the elderly or pets in parked vehicles. Vehicles heat up very quickly and can become dangerous, even with the windows open.

For more information visit *Extreme Heat* on the Hot Topics section of our homepage at www.saginawpublichealth.org. Be Wise. Be Well.

END