

SA State Emergency Service Extreme Heat Information

It is important to prepare for extreme heat to ensure that you stay safe and well during these times.

This guide provides some simple steps to surviving a heatwave and also lists the signs to look out for in others to ensure everyone's safety

Are you prepared for the heat?



Stay hydrated

You should drink two to three litres of water a day, even if you don't feel thirsty. Avoid 'fizzy', alcoholic and caffeinated drinks and do not take salt tablets (unless instructed to by a GP).



Dress for summer

Lightweight, light coloured clothing reflects heat and sunlight and helps your body maintain a normal temperature.



Check on those at risk

Visit 'at risk' individuals such as the sick and elderly at least twice a day and keep an eye on children. Watch for signs of heat-related illness.



Minimise sun exposure

Keep out of the sun as much as possible. If you must be in the sun, wear a shirt, hat and sunglasses. Also make sure you wear sunscreen to prevent sunburn - sunburn limits the body's ability to cope with heat.



Prepare your home

Prepare your home early. Service or replace your air conditioner BEFORE you need it. Closing curtains, awnings and blinds can also help to keep the home cool.



Make use of air conditioning

If you don't have air conditioning, make use of public facilities, government agencies or other air-conditioned buildings. Portable fans are also useful in drawing in cool air, or exhausting warm air from a room.



Remember your pets

Pets can be particularly vulnerable to the heat. Make sure they have shade and plenty of cool water to last the day.



Seek medical advice if necessary

Refer to the end of this brochure for contact details, or consult your GP.

Important contact information:

- For medical advice telephone Healthdirect Australia **1800 022 222**
- For immediate medical assistance telephone **000**
- For SES response telephone **132 500**
- For life threatening emergencies telephone **000**
- For further information go to www.ses.sa.gov.au

Who is most at risk?

The heat can affect anyone, but some people run a greater risk of serious harm. Those at serious risk include:

- elderly people, babies and young children
- people with serious health issues (chronic conditions, physical and mental)
- people with mobility problems
- people who are physically active, such as manual workers and sportspeople.
- people who misuse alcohol or take illicit drugs

HEAT STRESS SYMPTOMS AND FIRST AID TREATMENT

DISORDER	SYMPTOMS	WHAT YOU SHOULD DO
Unusual discomfort and heat cramps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Heavy sweating ▪ Thirst ▪ Tiredness ▪ Irritability ▪ Loss of appetite ▪ Prickly heat rash ▪ Nausea ▪ Muscle spasms, twitching ▪ Moist, cool skin ▪ Painful muscle cramps (limbs and abdomen). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drink more water ▪ Have a cold shower or bath ▪ Lie in a cool place with legs supported and slightly elevated ▪ Massage muscles gently to ease spasms, or firmly if cramped ▪ Apply ice packs ▪ Drink glucose ▪ Do not have salt.
Heat exhaustion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Profuse sweating ▪ Cold clammy, pale skin ▪ Fatigue, weakness and restlessness ▪ Headache and vomiting ▪ Weak but rapid pulse ▪ Poor coordination ▪ Normal temperature, but faintness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lay victim down in a cool place as above ▪ Loosen clothing and apply wet cloths to head and body ▪ Fan, or move victim to an air conditioned area ▪ Give sips of cold water ▪ If vomiting continues, seek medical assistance immediately.
Heat stroke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Confusion ▪ Headache ▪ Nausea ▪ Dizziness ▪ Skin flushed, hot and unusually dry ▪ Dry swollen tongue ▪ High body temperature ▪ Rapid strong pulse at first, then weaker ▪ Deep unconsciousness may develop rapidly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seek medical advice urgently ▪ Lay victim in cool place as above and remove outer clothing ▪ Check airway and breathing (if unconscious) ▪ Cool victim quickly, applying cold water, or wrap in a wet sheet and fan them ▪ When conscious, give sips of water ▪ For immediate medical assistance telephone 000.