



Yakima Health District

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For Immediate Release	Contact:
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Staying Healthy in Hot Weather

Yakima County, WA - With temperatures in the Yakima Valley forecasted to reach over 100°F during the coming week, public health officials are encouraging people to take precautions to protect their health. Several medical problems may arise from hot weather, including heat exhaustion and heat stroke, especially in older adults and young children. People with a chronic illness are at a higher risk as well.

Dr. Chris Spitters, Health Officer for the Yakima Health District, warns that “Extended periods of time in the sun can lead to severe health problems. Yet, these health problems are easily avoided by simple actions such as drinking plenty of water, using sunscreen, limiting outdoor activity, and dressing in light-weight clothing”. Other prevention strategies include:

- Spending more time in air conditioned places. If air conditioning is not available at home, consider visiting a Mall, Movie Theater or other cool public places.
- Covering windows that receive morning or afternoon sun.
- Drink water throughout the day, do not wait until you’re thirsty.
- Limiting direct exposure to the sun.
- Avoiding or reducing strenuous activity.
- Limiting outdoor activity to early morning and evening hours.
- Checking up on elderly neighbors and family members
- **Never leaving infants, children, people with mobility challenges, or pets in a parked car-- even with the window rolled down.**

Heat exhaustion occurs when the body is not able to cool itself quickly enough. Symptoms of heat exhaustion include muscle cramps, weakness, dizziness, headache, nausea and vomiting. People exhibiting signs of heat exhaustion should move to a cooler location, rest for a few minutes and slowly drink a cool non-alcoholic beverage. If symptoms persist or worsen, seek medical attention immediately. Severe overheating can lead to heat stroke, which can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not provided immediately.

Symptoms of heat stroke include:

- extremely high body temperature (above 103°F)
- red, hot, and dry skin
- rapid, strong pulse
- nausea, confusion and unconsciousness.

Please seek medical care immediately for heat stroke.

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