Extreme Heat: Tips for Moms & Caregivers

Extreme heat can be dangerous for young children and pregnant moms who are more sensitive to high temperatures and dehydration. These quick tips can help you keep your family safe, cool, and healthy on hot days.

Stay Hydrated

DRINK PLENTY OF WATER

- ☐ Extreme heat can cause dehydration and excessive sweating, increase your water intake (8-10 glasses recommended) to make up for fluid loss.
- ☐ Make sure children take regular water breaks.
- ☐ Babies under 6 months old may require extra breastmilk or formula feeds. Babies over 6-months old can be offered cool water in addition to normal feeds.



OTHER DRINK OPTIONS

- ☐ Make your own electrolyte drink by mixing 1/2 cup of fresh citrus juice (lemon, lime, or orange), 1/4 teaspoon of sea salt, and 2 teaspoons of raw honey or maple syrup to taste.
- ☐ Pedialyte, coconut water and hydration packets can also be used to replace electrolytes.
- ☐ Avoid highly caffeinated and sugary drinks like coffee, soda, and teas that may dehydrate you.



Dress for Heat Safety

- ☐ Choose light-colored, loose clothing and a sun hat.
- ☐ Use water-resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher.
- ☐ Apply baby-safe sunscreen for infants and young children and regularly re-apply every two hours or after swimming/sweating.
- ☐ If your infant is sweating, they are too warm. Find a place for them to cool down as soon as possible.

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Stay Cool

- ☐ Limit outdoor time between 10am-4pm and choose shaded play areas when outside.
- ☐ Avoid strenuous activities.
- ☐ Stay indoors, when possible, use A/C.
- ☐ Use fans, but only if indoor temperatures are less than 90 degrees. Using above 90 degrees can increase body temperature.
- ☐ Use water to cool down: swimming, misting with a spray bottle, cool showers/baths, cool washcloths, or dipping hands/feet in cool water.

Cooling Centers

Visit your county website to identify available cooling centers. These tend to be located at recreation centers and public libraries.



Pay Attention to Risk Factors

- ☐ Never leave kids in a parked car; even with a window open, temperatures inside the car can rise almost 20 degrees.
- ☐ Children with asthma are at a greater risk during extreme heat—follow the same guidelines for pregnant women on the next page.
- ☐ If you're pregnant, speak to your provider about tips and resources to protect you and your baby.

During periods of prolonged extreme heat, partner violence increases. If you need help, **National Domestic Violence Hotline** can connect you to support and resources in your area. Call in Spanish or English, 1-800-799-SAFE (7233), available 24/7, or text "START" to 88788.

Extreme Heat: Tips for Pregnant People

Pregnant people are a high-risk group during extreme heat, and you are more likely to get heat exhaustion, heat stroke, or other heat-related illness. It will be harder to cool both you and your baby. Discuss your current risks with a health provider and take extra precautions on hot days.

Be Aware of Heat Risk & Air Quality

Use the CDC Heat & Health Tracker app to check heat risk and AQI for your ZIP code.

HEAT RISK

Indicates how dangerous hot weather is from White (none) to Magenta (extreme).

- ☐ Most pregnant women are sensitive to heat on Orange heat risk days, but some are sensitive on Yellow days. Work with your doctor to know when to take action.
- ☐ On Red and Magenta days, limit your time outside if possible

AIR QUALITY INDEX (AQI)

Indicates how healthy outdoor air is to breathe ranging from 0 (Good) to 500 (Hazardous).

- ☐ If air quality is less than 100—it is considered healthy for most women.
- ☐ If air quality is more than 100—it is considered unhealthy. Limit outdoor activity. Consider using an indoor air purifier.

Manage Swelling & Circulation

- ☐ Elevate feet when resting
- ☐ Take short walks or stretch breaks
- ☐ Consider wearing compression socks



Make a Heat Action Plan

- ☐ Review medications that may increase heat sensitivity with your health provider.
- ☐ Have a cooling plan, safe indoor locations mapped, and emergency contacts ready.

Extreme Heat: Tips for Pregnant People

Monitor Symptoms of Overheating

HEAT EXHAUSTION

Symptoms include:

- ☐ Sweating heavily
- ☐ Cool, clammy skin
- ☐ Headache
- ☐ Cramps
- ☐ Shallow breathing
- ☐ Extreme Thirst

Take the following actions:

- ☐ Get to a cooler place or take a cool shower
- ☐ Drink water

If symptoms don't improve within an hour or worsen, get medical help immediately.

HEAT STROKE

Symptoms include:

- ☐ High body temperature (over 103°F)
- ☐ Little or no sweating
- ☐ Dizziness or loss of consciousness
- ☐ Confusion
- ☐ Vomiting

Symptoms in infants include:

- ☐ Floppiness
- ☐ Fewer wet diapers
- ☐ Dry mouth
- ☐ Refusal to feed

If you think you or a child may have heat stroke, call 911 and take IMMEDIATE action to cool while waiting for help.

Power Outage Tip

It is common for heat waves to cause power outages. Ensure your phone is fully charged and that medicines or breastmilk are stored properly—if they require refrigeration, limit the number of times you open the door.

