



KANE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Health Department offers tips on keeping cool in summer's heat**

Weather forecasters are calling for the mercury to hover at or above 90 degrees for the next week and now would be a good time to review the tips for keeping cool during the summer heat.

“As summer temperatures climb back into the 90s, we want to remind residents that prolonged exposure to heat can have serious health consequences,” said Kane County Health Department’s Director of Health Protection Claire Dobbins.

Remember to keep cool and use common sense:

- Avoid hot foods and heavy meals—they add heat to your body.
- Drink plenty of fluids and replace salts and minerals in your body. Do not take salt tablets unless under medical supervision.
- Dress infants and children in cool, loose clothing and shade their heads and faces with hats or an umbrella.
- Limit sun exposure during mid-day hours and in places of potential severe exposure such as beaches.
- Do not leave infants, children, or pets in a parked car.
- Provide plenty of fresh water for your pets, and leave the water in a shady area.

**Drink Plenty of Fluids**

During hot weather you will need to increase your fluid intake, regardless of your activity level. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. During heavy exercise in a hot environment, drink two to four glasses (16-32 ounces) of cool fluids each hour. Don't drink liquids that

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contain alcohol, or large amounts of sugar—these actually cause you to lose more body fluid. Also avoid very cold drinks, because they can cause stomach cramps.

### **Wear Appropriate Clothing and Sunscreen**

Wear as little clothing as possible when you are at home. Choose lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing. Sunburn affects your body's ability to cool itself and causes a loss of body fluids. It also causes pain and damages the skin. If you must go outdoors, protect yourself from the sun by wearing a wide-brimmed hat (also keeps you cooler) along with sunglasses, and by putting on sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher (the most effective products say "broad spectrum" or "UVA/UVB protection" on their labels) 30 minutes prior to going out. Continue to reapply it according to the package directions.

### **Use a Buddy System**

When working in the heat, monitor the condition of your co-workers and have someone do the same for you. Heat-induced illness can cause a person to become confused or lose consciousness. If you are 65 years of age or older, have a friend or relative call to check on you twice a day during a heat wave. If you know someone in this age group, check on them at least twice a day.

### **Monitor Those at High Risk**

Although any one at any time can suffer from heat-related illness, some people are at greater risk than others.

- Infants and children up to four years of age are sensitive to the effects of high temperatures and rely on others to regulate their environments and provide adequate liquids.
- People 65 years of age or older may not compensate for heat stress efficiently and are less likely to sense and respond to change in temperature.
- People who are overweight may be prone to heat sickness because of their tendency to retain more body heat.

“Because heat-related deaths are preventable, people need to be aware of who is at greatest risk and what actions can be taken to prevent a heat-related illness or death,” Dobbin said. “A little prevention goes a long way toward enjoying the summer season.”

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