

Heat Safety: Heat-Related Illnesses

During extremely hot weather, it's easy to become dehydrated or for your body to overheat. This can lead to life-threatening heat-related illness such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Being able to identify the signs and how to respond are your best chance to recover as quickly as possible:



Dehydration signs

- + Dizziness
- + Tiredness
- + Irritability
- + Thirst
- + Bright or dark urine
- + Loss of appetite
- + Fainting

What to do

- + Drink water regularly and consider an oral rehydration solution.
- + Avoid alcohol and limit drinks high in caffeine and sugar
- + Move to a cool place, lie down and remove excess clothing
- + Seek medical help if you start to feel unwell



Heat cramp signs

- + Profuse sweating
- + Painful muscle cramps, usually in legs and abdominal muscles

What to do

- + Stop activity and sit quietly in a cool place
- + Increase fluid intake
- + Rest for a few hours before returning to activity, if it's safe to do so
- + Stretch and gently massage affected muscles
- + Seek medical help if cramps persist



Heat exhaustion signs

- + Raised body temperature
- + Dry mouth and eyes
- + Headache and shortness of breath
- + Nausea or vomiting
- + Heavy sweating and/or muscle cramps
- + Pale complexion
- + Fatigue, weakness and restlessness
- + Poor coordination
- + Weak but rapid pulse

Take immediate action

- + Move to a cool place, lie down and remove excess clothing
- + Try a cool shower, bath or sponge bath and place a moist, cool cloth on forehead, wrists, sides of neck, underarms and groin area. Fan continuously or sit near a fan or air conditioner – avoid shivering.
- + Take small sips of cool water or diluted fruit juice (1 part juice in 4 parts water)
- + Seek emergency medical assistance if the person does not improve with cooling and fluids, deteriorates, develops altered behaviour or mental state, or has other serious symptoms.



Heat stroke signs

Heat stroke is a medical emergency - call 000 immediately

- + Confusion, poor coordination or slurred speech
- + Fainting
- + Seizures or loss of consciousness
- + Extreme fatigue
- + Rapid pulse
- + Fast and shallow breathing
- + Dry, swollen tongue
- + Extremely thirsty
- + Headaches
- + Vomiting and diarrhea

Medical emergency

- + **Call 000 immediately**
- + Check the person's airway, breathing and pulse—if unresponsive, commence CPR
- + If possible, move them to a cool place, lie them down and remove excess clothing
- + Cool the body with cool, wet cloths on their forehead, wrists, sides of neck, underarms and groin area. Fan them continuously
- + Give them small sips of fluids if conscious and able to swallow
- + Do not give any medications unless prescribed by a doctor

If you need medical advice during the heat, call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)

In the case of an emergency, always call triple zero (000).



**Queensland
Government**

BlueCare's heat health resources were funded by the Queensland Government under the Sector Adaptation Plan co-investment program, to advance climate change resilience in the human health and wellbeing sector. This is another example of how the Queensland Government's [Climate Action Plan](#) is making a difference.

Source: Queensland Health, [Signs and symptoms of heat-related illness](#), 2026.

bluecare.org.au/heatsafety

**Heat happens.
Stay Cool.**