

Beat the HEAT

Did you know?



February 2016

NASA confirmed that February 2016 was the warmest month ever measured globally, at **1.35** degrees Celsius above the long term average



2016

The average global temperature for 2016 is expected to be between **0.72C** and **0.96C** warmer than the average temperature of 14C



21st Century

Six of the top ten heat waves in terms of deaths have occurred in the 21st century, which has also recorded eight of the ten **warmest** years

Why is this happening?

The primary reasons for the occurrence of this heat wave are **El Niño** and **La Niña**, which are parts of an oscillation in the ocean atmosphere system that can impact weather and climate conditions across the globe.

Like a pot of boiling water on a stove, the warm seawater in the tropical and northeast Pacific Ocean radiates heat into the atmosphere and raises the planet's average temperature



Steps to deal with this extreme heat

1. PREPARE

Prepare Yourself



Stay aware of upcoming temperature changes and heat index of your body



Discuss heat safety precautions with members of your household and prepare accordingly



Choose places you could go to for relief from the heat during the warmer parts of the day

Prepare for Others



Know the elderly, young, sick or overweight neighbourhood. They are more likely to become victims of excessive heat



Get trained in First Aid to treat heat-related emergencies



Try and provide drinking water facilities for the public outside your homes and offices

Prepare the Workplace



Be particularly aware when working in already hazardous environments



Take regular breaks in cooler environments away from the sun and other sources of heat



Appropriate personal protective equipment should be provided where necessary

2. OBSERVE FOR SYMPTOMS



Nausea and vomiting



Alteration in sweating



Muscle cramps



Flushed skin & skin rash



Altered mental state



Rapid breathing & headaches



Racing heart rate



Body temperature above 40C signifies heatstroke

3. RESPOND

Heat Cramps



Heat cramps are muscular spasms that usually occur in the legs or abdomen. Get the person to a cooler place, lightly stretch the affected muscle and gently massage the area. Give an electrolyte containing fluid.

Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion often affects athletes, fire-fighters, construction workers and factory workers.



If the person is conscious, give a cool fluid such as a sports drink or fruit juice to restore fluids and electrolytes

Move the person to a cooler environment with circulating air. Remove/loosen clothing & apply cool, wet towels.

If the person's condition does not improve then take him/her to the emergency room

Heat Stroke



Signs of heat stroke include extremely high body temperature, red skin which may be dry or moist; changes in consciousness; rapid, weak pulse; rapid, shallow breathing; confusion; vomiting; and seizures.

Rapidly cool the body by immersing the person up to the neck in cold water, if possible douse or spray the person with cold water. Sponge the person with ice water doused towels over the entire body.

Take Precautions

Protect yourself with the right clothing. Loose cotton clothes, or protective gear at the work place, that traps air and helps cool the body.

Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid drinks with caffeine or alcohol. Eat snacks or meals regularly to replenish electrolyte need.

Schedule heavy work for earlier or later in the day instead of the hottest midday hours. Use sunblock to protect skin.

Check on family, friends and neighbours who do not have air conditioning, who spend much of their time alone or who are more likely to be affected by the heat.

Source: American Red Cross