

## Flyer for Staff / Heat Wave Safety

**Dehydration:** Mild to moderate dehydration makes the heart work faster and leads to reduced fluid available for sweating. **DO drink plenty of water and keep cool to prevent heat stress.**

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| Symptoms:  | What to do – first aid  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dizziness and tiredness</li> <li>• Irritability</li> <li>• thirst</li> <li>• Bright or dark yellow urine</li> <li>• Loss of appetite</li> <li>• Fainting</li> </ul> | <p>Drink plenty of water or diluted fruit juice (1-part juice in 4 parts water) and avoid tea, coffee, or alcohol</p> <p>Have an ice block</p> <p>Move somewhere cool, ideally air-conditioned</p> <p>If possible, use a spray bottle with water to cool yourself down</p> <p><b>If you start to feel unwell, seek medical advice</b></p> |

**Heat cramps:** usually affects people who sweat a lot during strenuous activity (e.g., sport or gardening). The sweating causes the body to lose salt and water. The low salt levels in the muscles may be the cause of heat cramps and they can be a symptom of heat exhaustion.

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| Symptoms:     | What to do – first aid / Stop all activity ; lie in a cool space, legs slightly raised  |
| Muscle pains  | Drink water or diluted fruit juice (1-part juice in 4 parts water)  |
| Muscle spasms | Have a cool shower or bath. Massage limbs to ease spasms, apply cool packs  |
|               | Rest until a few hours after the cramps subside. (Exertion may lead to heat exhaustion/heat stroke). Seek medical advice if there is no improvement |

**Heat exhaustion:** the body's response to an excessive loss of water and salt contained in sweat. If heat exhaustion is not treated, it can turn into heat stroke

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| Symptoms: Heavy sweating (cool and moist skin), pale skin   | What to do – first aid / Move to a cool place, ideally air-conditioned and lie down. Remove excess clothing / Take small sips of cool fluids |
| Fast and weak pulse rate.   | Take a cool shower, bath, or sponge bath   |
| Shallow and fast breathing. Muscle weakness or cramps. Tiredness and dizziness. Headache, fainting. | Put cool packs under armpits, on the groin, or on the back of the neck to reduce body heat   |
| Nausea or vomiting  | If symptoms worsen or if there is no improvement, seek urgent medical advice and call an ambulance if necessary                              |

**Heat stroke:** is a life-threatening emergency and occurs when the body temperature rises above 40.5°C. Immediate first aid is very important, aim to lower body temperature as quickly as possible

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| Symptoms:                                     | What to do – first aid / Immediately call 000 and ask for an ambulance   |
| Sudden rise in body temperature               | Move into the shade, lay the person down, keep them as still as possible   |
| Red, hot, and dry skin (sweating has stopped) | Give small sips of cool fluids if conscious and able to drink. Bring their temperature down using any method available (sponging with cool water, cool shower, spraying with cool water from garden hose or soaking clothes with cool water) |
| Dry swollen tongue, rapid pulse               | Put cool packs under armpits, on the groin, or on the back of the neck to reduce body heat   |
| Rapid shallow breathing                       | Do not give aspirin or paracetamol; they do not help and may be harmful  |
| Intense thirst, headache                      | If unconscious, lay the person on their side (recovery position) and check they can breathe properly   |
| Nausea or vomiting                            | Perform CPR if needed  |
| Dizziness or confusion                        |  |
| Poor coordination or slurred speech           |  |
| Aggressive or bizarre behaviour               |  |
| Loss of consciousness, seizures, or coma      |  |

## How to prepare for a heat wave

- ☐ Listen to local weather forecasts and stay aware of upcoming temperature changes.
- ☐ Plan to avoid exposure to direct sunlight as it can increase the risk of the heat's effect.
- ☐ Prepare for the possibility of power outages, ☐ Make sure vehicles have fuel.
- ☐ Ensure home and car air conditioners are in good working order with the filters cleaned.
- ☐ If you do not have air conditioning, choose places you could go to for relief from the heat during the warmest part of the day (schools, libraries, theatres, malls).
- ☐ Be aware that people living in urban areas may be at greater risk from the effects of a prolonged heat wave than are people living in rural areas & quality of air may be affected. People with respiratory problems may have difficulties
- ☐ Have some icy-poles, ice chips or jelly as an alternative source of liquid. Have drinks available in your vehicle if you go out.
- ☐ Ensure that you consider others in the family such as those who are disabled, young, or elderly, that their needs are met, and that they have plenty of fluids available & accessible. .
- ☐ Ensure that pets & animals have water and shade available

## What to do during a heat wave

- ☐ Listen to ABC Radio for critical updates from the Bureau of Meteorology
- ☐ Never leave clients, children, pets in, or alone in enclosed vehicles.
- ☐ Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid caffeine or alcohol. Eat ice blocks or ice chips. ☐ Eat small meals and eat more often.
- ☐ Wear loose-fitting, lightweight, light- coloured clothing. No dark colours they absorb the sun's rays.
- ☐ Use air conditioning. ☐ Fans may help if indoor temperature is less than 35°C, **but NOT above 35°C.**
- ☐ Keep windows and curtains shut if the outside temperature is higher than the inside temperature.
- ☐ Do not use fans in rooms on days of high humidity/temperatures where windows and doors are shut; because this simply circulates the same hot air. If the air outside is cooler than the air inside, open the windows.