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BENTON-FRANKLIN HEALTH DISTRICT WARNS ABOUT HEAT ILLNESSES

Helpful Tips to Beat the Heat

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 23, 2021

KENNEWICK — As temperatures rise, so does the risk of heat-related illness or death. Benton-Franklin Health District wants area residents to be aware of the signs of heat exhaustion and heat stroke and offers suggestions for ways to stay safe in dangerously hot weather.

A person suffering from heat exhaustion will experience heavy sweating and feel faint or dizzy, sometimes with nausea or vomiting and/or muscle cramps. Their skin will be cool, pale, and clammy and they will have a rapid, weak pulse. Immediately seek a cooler place, preferably air-conditioned, drink water, and take a cool shower or use cold, wet cloths to cool down.

With heat stroke, a more severe form of heat-related illness, a person will have reduced sweating with red, hot, dry skin and a body temperature over 103 degrees. They may lose consciousness and have a headache, nausea or vomiting, and rapid, strong pulse. Call 911 immediately if you suspect heat stroke as it can be life-threatening. Move the person to a cooler place and help lower their temperature with cool cloths or a cool bath, while waiting for help to arrive.

Young children, the elderly, people who are overweight, and those who are on certain medications are at greater risk of heat-related illness. Children's bodies heat up three to five times faster than adults.

Take the following precautions to stay safe:

- Avoid being outdoors as much as possible. Restrict strenuous activities like exercise or yard work to the early morning hours.
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat, sunscreen, and long, lightweight, loose-fitting clothing
- Drink lots of fluids, but avoid drinks that contain alcohol, caffeine, or large amounts of sugar
- Don't leave any people or pets in vehicles, even for a few minutes
- Check frequently on people who are elderly, ill, or in need of assistance
- Find air-conditioned public places like libraries and shopping malls

For more information, go to <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/BePreparedBeSafe/SevereWeatherandNaturalDisasters/HotWeatherSafety>

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Benton-Franklin Health District Website
www.bfhd.wa.gov

Washington Department of Health
www.doh.wa.gov

Centers for Disease Control
www.cdc.gov

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