

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



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HEALTHCARE QUALITY AND SAFETY BRANCH

BLAST FAX 2022-28

TO: Healthcare Administrators

FROM: Commissioner Manisha Juthani, MD

CC: Deputy Commissioner Heather Aaron, MPH, LNHA
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DATE: July 19, 2022

SUBJECT: **Hot Weather Alert**

In anticipation for significant hot weather, please review your emergency plans, check your generators and its fuel supply, ensure the completeness of emergency food and other supplies, and as always, check with your local weather channel via television and radio.

These weather conditions can impact cooling systems and overall patient/resident health. Please see the attached recommendations for management of patients/residents during hot weather.

In addition, please see Governor Ned Lamont's protocol on preparing for extreme hot weather forecasted for the next several days.



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DPH UPDATE



July 2022

Connecticut Department of Public Health

Recommendations for Management of Patients/Residents During Hot Weather

- Baseline assessment of all residents (some residents tolerate the heat better than others). Make particular note of residents with ongoing febrile illnesses, as well as those subject to excessive fluid loss (e.g., diarrhea, vomiting, open wounds).
- Regular, more frequent assessment of residents at risk (e.g. cardiovascular or respiratory disease, neurologic conditions that affect the temperature regulating mechanism, those who cannot communicate their thirst).
- Notify facility Medical Director. Maintain a roster of residents "at risk" and report on status regularly to Medical Director.
- Monitor and document air temperatures in various parts of the building at regular intervals.
- Ensure adequate fluids for each individual resident, as well as make fluids available for staff. Increase frequency of "rounds" to encourage resident consumption of fluids; set up "water stations" throughout the facility; offer various forms of fluids (e.g. popsicles, watermelon).
- Initiate and monitor Intake and Output on patients with risk factors/diagnoses and those whose intake is poor. Daily weights may also be appropriate.
- Ensure a sufficient and safe supply of fans to circulate air.
- Evaluate resident's clothing needs, especially those cognitively unable to evaluate own needs.
- Monitor residents' temperatures and provide cool sponge baths.
- If residents choose to go outside, monitor carefully for heat-related symptoms and identify those residents who may be prone to heat-related problems or photosensitivity due to medications. Encourage residents to sit in shaded outdoor areas; apply sunscreen as needed, unless resident is allergic to product.
- Encourage residents to sit in areas of the facility that may be air-conditioned.

- Prior to predicted heatwaves, check air conditioning systems and supplies. Ensure that facility equipment maintenance contracts are current, as well as emergency call list for rental companies (e.g. portable air conditioning units).
- If air conditioning is available, provide for regular maintenance. If air conditioning problems develop, alert corporate office and/or local building authorities as appropriate.
- Communicate status of repairs to residents and families by positing signs in the facility. Incorporate heat-related events in the facility's Disaster Plan.
- Maintenance staff should make regular rounds and monitor building systems throughout the period of hot weather (e.g. overloaded electrical circuits, open windows). Documentation of monitoring efforts and interventions should be maintained.
- Notify DPH regarding issues of mechanical failures and the measures implemented by the facility. DPH may call the nurse in charge to ascertain implementation of appropriate interventions, status of residents, and ambient temperatures.

Comparison of Heatstroke and Heat Exhaustion

Heatstroke	Heat Exhaustion
Definition	Definition
A condition or derangement of the thermo-regulatory center due to exposure to the rays of the sun or very high temperatures. Loss of body heat is inadequate or absent.	A state of definite weakness produced by the excess loss of normal fluids and sodium chloride in the form of sweat.
History	History
Exposure to high environmental temperature; use of medications that increase heat production or inhibit perspiration.	Exposure to heat, usually indoors.
Differential Symptoms	Differential Symptoms
Face: Red, dry, and hot Skin: Hot, dry, and no sweating Temperature: High, 106° to 110°F (41.1° to 43.3°C) Pulse: Full, rapid, strong, bounding Respirations: Dyspneic, fast, sonorous Muscles: Tense and possible convulsions Eyes: Pupils are dilated but equal	Face: Pale, cool, arid moist Skin: Cool clammy, with profuse diaphoresis Temperature: Usually not above 100°F (37.8°C) Pulse: Weak, thready, and rapid Respirations: Shallow and quiet Muscles: Tense and contracted Eyes: Pupils are normal; eyeballs maybe soft

Treatment	Treatment
<p>Absolute rest with head elevated; keep body cool by any means available until hospitalized, but do not use alcohol applied to skin. Take temperature every 10 minutes, and do not allow it to fall below 101°F (38.5°C) to prevent hypothermia.</p> <p>Drugs: Allow no stimulants; give infusions of normal saline (to force fluids).</p>	<p>Keep patient quiet; head should be lowered to prevent orthostatic hypotension; keep body warm to prevent onset of shock.</p> <p>Drugs: Salty fluids and fruit juices should be given frequently in small amounts. Intravenous isotonic saline will be required if patient is unconscious.</p>

Source: Taber's Cyclopedic Medical Dictionary, 18th Edition

- If the above conditions are noted, monitor Intake and Output and administer oxygen if ordered by the physician.

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The Office of Governor Ned Lamont

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Governor Lamont Activates Connecticut's Extreme Hot Weather Protocol To Help Ensure the Availability of Cooling Centers Over the Next Several Days

Press Releases



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

GOVERNOR NED LAMONT

07/18/2022

Governor Lamont Activates Connecticut's Extreme Hot Weather Protocol To Help Ensure the Availability of Cooling Centers Over the Next Several Days

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Ned Lamont today announced that due to a weather forecast indicating that temperatures over the next several days will reach more than 95 degrees with the heat index expected to go over triple digits at times, he is directing Connecticut's extreme hot weather protocol to be activated beginning at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, July 19, 2022, and remaining in effect through 8:00 p.m. on Sunday, July 24, 2022.

The purpose of the protocol is to ensure that the most vulnerable populations receive protection from the hot conditions. While enacted, a system is set up for state agencies, municipalities, and other partners to coordinate with United Way 2-1-1 to make sure that information regarding cooling centers is available statewide, providing a location to get some relief from the hot conditions.

Anyone in need of a cooling center should call 2-1-1 or look online at [211ct.org \(https://www.211ct.org/\)](https://www.211ct.org/) to find their nearest location.

"We're about to experience our first heat wave of the year that over the next several days will bring very hot conditions, especially during the peak sunlight hours of the day," **Governor Lamont said.** "I strongly urge anyone who needs a place to cool off to call 2-1-1 to find their nearest available cooling center. Everyone should take the necessary precautions as the heat rises over the next several days. A few steps can greatly reduce heat-related issues, especially for the elderly, the very young, and people with respiratory ailments who are more susceptible to the effects of high temperatures."

The following actions are implemented while the protocol is enacted:

- The Connecticut Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection's Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security uses its WebEOC communications network, which is an internet-based system that enables local, regional, and state emergency management officials and first responders to share up-to-date information about a variety of situations and conditions.
- Municipalities and other partners submit information on the opening of cooling centers into the WebEOC, providing a real-time database on the availability of these locations statewide. United Way 2-1-1 uses the system to act as a clearinghouse to assist residents in locating a cooling center.
- Regional coordinators from the Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security monitor WebEOC in order to respond to any requests from municipalities for state assistance.
- The energy utility companies provide the state with regular updates regarding the impact of the weather conditions on their respective utilities throughout the duration of the protocol.

Although anyone can suffer from heat-related illness, some people are at greater risk than others:

- Infants and young children 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.
- People who overexert during work or exercise may become dehydrated and susceptible to heat sickness.
- People who are physically ill, especially those with heart disease or high blood pressure, or who take certain medications, such as for depression, insomnia, or poor circulation, may be affected by extreme heat.

Some prevention tips to stay safe in extreme heat include:

- Keep your body temperature cool to avoid heat-related illness.
- Stay in air-conditioned buildings as much as possible. If you must be outdoors, try to limit your outdoor activity to the morning and evening. Try to rest often in shady areas so that your body has a chance to cool off.
- Find an air-conditioned shelter. (Call 2-1-1 for a list of cooling centers.) Do not rely on a fan as your primary cooling device.
- Avoid direct sunlight.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- Take cool showers or baths.
- Check on those most at-risk several times a day.
- Pets that cannot be brought indoors should be provided ready access to water and shade to keep them cool.

Everyone is also reminded to stay hydrated during periods extreme heat. Because bodies lose fluid through sweat, dehydration is common while experiencing very high temperatures. It is strongly encouraged to:

- Drink more water than usual.
- Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink more fluids.
- Drink two to four cups of water every hour while working or exercising outside.
- Avoid alcohol or liquids containing high amounts of sugar.
- Remind others to drink enough water.

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