



HEAT AND PEOPLE IN NEED OF CARE

INFORMATION GUIDE FOR FAMILY CAREGIVERS

WHY IS HEAT PROBLEMATIC

- High temperatures can pose **significant health risks** for the elderly and individuals in need of care, especially those in home care settings.
- With age, the body's ability to **regulate temperature** and perceive heat decreases. Additionally, the **sense of thirst** may be diminished, leading to dehydration.
- Those who are **bedridden** are particularly at risk, as they cannot independently take measures to cool themselves down and may overheat due to bedding and warm clothing.
- Certain **pre-existing health conditions** and **medications** can increase susceptibility to heat-related illnesses.
- However, there are ways to protect yourself from overheating, dehydration and other heat-related health problems.

WHAT CAN I DO

With these cooling tips, you can help your relatives in need of care get through the hot season:

Ensure **sufficient fluid intake**: Ideally, 1.5 to 2 liters of water (mineral water is better for electrolyte balance than tap water), diluted fruit spritzers, or unsweetened fruit or herbal teas should be drunk throughout the day. Discuss the amount of fluids to drink, especially in case of chronic pre-existing conditions, with the doctor.

Tip: In the morning, prepare the amount of drinks for the day. This way, you can easily track the intake!

Watch for **signs of dehydration and overheating**, such as a dry mouth, cracked lips, dry, itchy skin, fatigue, weakness, loss of concentration, and weight loss.

Check the body temperature and provide **cooling** if necessary: Cold, damp cloths for face, neck or arms and legs, lukewarm foot and arm baths, calf wraps, spraying the skin with water, or lukewarm showers/washes can offer relief.

Avoid **heat buildup**: Use appropriate bedding (light cotton bed linen or linen sheets) and loose, airy clothing. Keep the apartment cool. For this purpose, air out preferably in the cooler morning and evening hours or at night. However, cross-ventilation during the day can reduce the strain caused by high humidity in the apartment. During the day, cover your windows with

blinds or curtains. The use of fans can also help, but pay attention to what feels good.

Offer **light meals**. Several small meals a day (especially fruits and vegetables) are better than a few large meals.

Schedule **physical activities** for the cooler mornings and evenings. For example, don't go shopping during peak heat.

In case of **pre-existing medical conditions**, be sure to consult a doctor for advice on heat and proper **medication storage** and **administration** during hot weather.

Stay informed about **heat warnings** so you can plan and act in time. You can do this by checking the local weather report or by requesting the automatic email notification for heat warnings from the German Weather Service (DWD).

Ask for **help** if necessary - a **network** of outpatient care services, neighbourhood assistance, shopping assistance etc. can support you.

Don't forget yourself - make sure that you get through the hot season well, too!

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

React quickly and seek help immediately in case of an **emergency**. Call **emergency services (112)** or contact a doctor, especially for acute heat-related symptoms such as:

- Severe headache
- Vomiting and nausea
- Cardiovascular problems
- Clouded consciousness/loss of consciousness
- Sudden confusion
- Seizures
- Body temperature above 39°C

More information under www.berlin.de/hitzeschutz-nk

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June 2024

