



Health Department

John O. Norquist
Mayor

Seth L. Foldy, MD
Commissioner of Health

Bevan K. Baker, CHE
Health Operations Director

Administration



Frank P. Zeidler Municipal Building, 841 North Broadway, 3rd Floor, Milwaukee, WI 53202-3653 phone (414) 286-3521 fax (414) 286-5990
web site: www.milwaukee.gov

For immediate release:
June 18, 2003

Media Contact: Raquel Madrid-Berkel
414-286-3175 (Office)
414-318-5711 (Pager)

WISCONSIN HEAT AWARENESS DAY- JUNE 19 **Milwaukee Health Department and local partners alert public to hazards of extreme heat**

Governor Jim Doyle has proclaimed June 19, 2003 as Wisconsin's Heat Awareness Day. The City of Milwaukee Health Department along with Heat Task Force partners will be holding a **news conference on June 19, 2003** to alert the public of the hazards associated with extended periods of extreme heat and the precautions needed for personal protection when this condition exists.

Temperatures over 90 degrees coupled with humidity are considered by health officials to be extreme. In addition to young children, individuals who may be at high-risk for extreme heat are older adults with chronic illness or those who may be taking medication that can inhibit perspiration.

WHEN: Thursday, June 19, 2003

WHERE: City of Milwaukee Health Department
841 North Broadway
(In front of water fountain on Broadway and Kilbourne)

TIME: 1:00 p.m.

SPEAKERS: Seth L. Foldy, M.D.
Health Commissioner

Gregg Lesky
Impact 211

MORE

HEAT TIPS

HEAT WAVE: TAKE IT SERIOUSLY

Hot weather makes our bodies work harder--just to get rid of the heat! People with heart or lung problems should "cool it" on any hot day. When two very hot days are joined with hot nights and high humidity, we have a dangerous heat wave that could hurt a lot of people. In Milwaukee a HEAT HEALTH ACTION NOTICE will be issued. Then you'll know *we all* really need to take care of ourselves . . . and others!

PEOPLE AT HIGHER RISK OF HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS

- * Older adults
- * Infants and young children
- * People with disabilities
- * Chronic heart or lung problems
- * Overweight persons
- * Those who work outdoors or in hot settings
- * Users of some medications: especially some drugs for mental disorders, movement disorders, allergies, depression and heart or circulatory problems
- * Isolated persons who won't know when or how to cool off or call for help

BE PREPARED FOR HEAT BEFORE IT HAPPENS!

Hook up with help: Isolated elderly or disabled persons in Milwaukee County can enroll in the Daily Telephone Reassurance Program of the Milwaukee County Department on Aging (289-6874). They will phone daily during a Heat Health Event to make sure the person is doing ok! Or make arrangements to be checked by a relative, friend or neighbor you trust.

Follow weather reports: Whenever temperatures reach the 90's it's wise to keep it cool. Watch for the "Heat Index," a number that uses heat and relative humidity or heat and dew point to predict health effects (similar to the Wind Chill Factor in winter). A Heat Index in the 90's tells you to slow down; above 100 it's a real hazard! When it's hot and humid without relief for two days, or if you observe a HEAT HEALTH ACTION NOTICE in the news, it's an emergency and time to think of disabled or aged family members and neighbors who may need help! You can also check on the weather by visiting the National Weather Service website at www.crh.noaa.gov/mkx

Plan in advance to keep cool: Do your windows open if needed? Do you have drapes or blinds to keep direct sun out of your home? Is there a cool basement, room with an air conditioner, or other nearby place to cool off? Who can you call for help or health questions, and who will check in on you if you need it?

BEAT THE HEAT THIS WAY!

Keep your living space cool! Cover windows to keep direct sun out. If you don't have an air conditioner, open windows to let air circulate. When it's hotter than 95 degrees, use fans to blow hot air out of the window, rather than to blow hot air on your body. Basements or ground floors are often cooler than upper floors.

NEVER leave children, disabled persons or pets in a car--even briefly! Temperatures in a car can become life-threatening within minutes.

Slow Down! Limit physical activity. Plan any outings or exertion for the coolest parts of the day (early morning or after dark).

Drink plenty! Eat lightly! Your body needs plenty of water or juice (but avoid alcohol or caffeine). Don't wait for thirst--drink frequently through the day. Avoid hot or heavy meals.

Infants should drink breast milk or formula to get the right balance of water, salts and energy. Don't dilute formula beyond what the instructions say unless instructed by your doctor. You may supplement your infant's fluids with an additional 4 to 8 ounces of water per day.

Wear lightweight, loose-fitting light-colored clothes, and add a hat or umbrella to keep your head cool. Don't forget sun-screen!

Easy ways to cool off include a cool (not cold) bath or shower (works faster than an air-conditioner!); a trip to an air-conditioned lobby or the basement; or cold wet rags applied to neck, head and limbs.

Don't stop medicines unless your doctor says so! Take extra care to stay cool, and ask your doctor or pharmacist for any special heat advice.

GET COOL OR GET HELP NOW IF YOU FEEL:

Dizziness Headache Muscle cramps
Nausea or Vomiting Weakness

CALL 911 FOR THESE SYMPTOMS:

Hot, dry skin Confusion Unconscious
Chest Pain Shortness of Breath

SOME NUMBERS TO CALL FOR HELP

- 211 Milwaukee at IMPACT..... 211**
(A *Central access point* for information about services available in the community)
- City of Milwaukee Health Department Heat Line.....286-3616**
(TDD 286-2025)
(Health information, advice and referral during Watch, Advisory and Warning events)
- ElderLink (24 hours).....289-6874**
(TDD 289-8591)
(Assistance and information for adults aged 60 and over)
- American Red Cross (24-hour recorded heat tips message)..... 299-9102**
- The Salvation Army.....228-8496**
(After hours: 265-6360)
(Assistance and information for vulnerable children, adults and families)

And remember... to make frequent checks on elderly, ill or disabled relatives, friends or neighbors when a heat wave strikes... and help them keep cool.