



## The New Jersey Poison Information & Education System

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Designated regional poison center  
for New Jersey by New Jersey  
Department of Health and Senior  
Services and the American  
Association of Poison Control  
Centers

### **WARNING:**

## Poison Control Center Advises Community on Heat and Sun-Related Illnesses

### **IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE**

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With a heat warning in effect, the potential for someone developing heat related illness increases significantly. Often referred to as “heatstroke” or “sunstroke,” heat related illness occurs when a person’s body temperature rises to a dangerous level. Factors such as underlying medical problems, dehydration and medication usage all play a role in heat-related illness. Human beings can reduce their body temperature in various ways, the most obvious of which is sweating. On hot, humid days, the increased moisture in the air slows the evaporation of sweat. When sweating is not adequate to cool your body, your temperature rises, and you may become ill. Because most heat-related illness or deaths occur during the summer, people should be aware of who is at greatest risk and what actions should be taken to prevent a heat-related illness. In addition to the elderly, very young, and people with chronic diseases being at risk, certain medications increase one’s risk.

### **Medications, which increase the risk of developing heat related illness, include but are not limited to:**

- Tricyclic antidepressants (amitriptyline- Elavil<sup>®</sup>, imipramine- Tofranil<sup>®</sup>, etc)
- Antihistamines (diphenhydramine- Benadryl<sup>®</sup>, chlorpheniramine- Chlor-Trimeton<sup>®</sup>)
- Diuretics (furosemide- Lasix<sup>®</sup>, hydrochlorothiazide, Diuril<sup>®</sup>)
- Antipsychotics (haloperidol- Haldol<sup>®</sup>)

### **Tips to prevent heat illness:**

- Air-conditioning is the number one protective factor against heat-related illness and death.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting, open-woven clothes.
- Wear a vented hat in the sun to protect yourself from the sun’s rays. Don’t forget sunscreen!
- Drink extra water (fluids) all day and less tea, coffee, cola and alcoholic beverages! Do NOT wait until you feel thirsty to drink – it may be too late!
- During outdoor activities, take frequent breaks and drink plenty of water or other fluids, even if you don’t feel thirsty.
- Reduce or schedule outdoor activity, for cooler times of the day, before 10am and after 6pm.
- If you have a chronic medical problem, ask your doctor about how to deal with the heat.

By knowing who is at risk and what prevention measures to take, heat-related illness and death can be prevented. For immediate treatment advice, as well as for prevention information. We are available 24 hours per day, every day. Call **1-800-222-1222**. Trained medical professionals handle all calls.

**Remember Help Is Just A Phone Call Away! 1-800-222-1222**

located at University of Medicine & Dentistry of New Jersey