Reviewed 22/07/2019 Ryan Palmer (Registered Care Manager)

We all look forward to a good summer, but high temperatures and humidity can present a risk to our health, especially as we get older. Here are some helpful tips on how to stay safe when it's hot.

**When you're out and about or at home:**

1. Don’t spend too much time outside at the hottest time of the day **(11am-3pm)** when the suns at its strongest. Try and keep in the shade when you can.
2. It’s a good idea to carry a bottle of water with you when you go out and about and you could also wear a sun hat.
3. Keep an eye on the forecast for any hot weather warnings and to make sure you don’t get caught out by unseasonably warm weather.
4. Look after your skin – use a sun cream of at least SPF15 and apply it regularly.
5. Make sure you don’t miss a spot with the sun cream **(bald patches tend to be overlooked).**
6. Be careful, even when it’s not sunny. UV levels can still be harmful when it's cloudy out.
7. Keep blinds down **(especially in rooms you’re not using)** and windows closed when it’s cooler inside than out.
8. A damp cloth or a splash of water on the back of your neck is better at cooling you down than a fan. Light-coloured, lightweight cotton clothing keeps you cooler.
9. Check how you’re storing your medication when it gets particularly hot - most should be kept below 25°C so it might be best to keep them in the fridge when it's really hot.
10. Check your skin every few months. Be particularly careful of moles. If you notice any changes to the colour or shape, or if they bleed, don’t hesitate to go and talk to your doctor.
11. Drink plenty to avoid getting dehydrated and eat even if you’re not feeling too hungry.
12. Watch out for signs of dehydration – confusion, cramps, dark urine and feeling weak. You don’t have to feel thirsty to be dehydrated.
13. Be careful to avoid heat exhaustion – the symptoms include headaches, dizziness, nausea and a fast pulse. If you feel unwell, lie down in a cool room, drink plenty of water and cool yourself with a splash of water.
14. Heat exhaustion could lead to heatstroke. Symptoms include falling unconscious and seizures.
15. Call 999 immediately if you think you or someone might have heatstroke.
16. If you know it’s going to be particularly hot and you think you might struggle, ask someone to check on you. Equally, check on someone else you think might struggle in the heat.

**A special note about medicines**

Some medicines increase the risk of heat-associated illness in susceptible people. These include:

• medicines that cause dehydration or electrolyte imbalance.

• medicines likely to reduce renal function.

• medicines that interfere with the production or regulation of heat

If a service user shows signs of heat-associated illness, report these symptoms to your line manager.

If you are concerned about a client's wellbeing, his or her GP should be immediately contacted or in an emergency call 999.