



PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
300 N. San Antonio Road • Santa Barbara, CA 93110
(805) 681-5102 • FAX (805) 681-5191
www.countyofsb.org

P R E S S R E L E A S E

News Media Contact:

Susan Klein-Rothschild
Public Information Officer
(805) 681-5435
(805) 896-1057 (cell)
sklein@sbcphd.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Public Health Reminder: Be Cautious in Hot Weather

As above average temperatures are expected in Santa Barbara County through the weekend, it is a good time for residents to remember precautions to prevent serious health conditions related to heat.

Although hot weather is expected at certain times of the year, it can and does have serious health affects. County Health Officer, Dr. Takashi Wada notes, "Heat causes about 400 deaths per year in the United States, more than all other natural disasters combined. What's most important is that all heat-related illnesses are preventable."

Seniors, infants and young children, and people with chronic health conditions are most vulnerable to health problems during hot weather. For those who are not in these high risk categories, it is helpful to check on family members, neighbors, and friends during extremely hot weather.

To prevent overheating, use cool compresses, misting, showers and baths. Call 911 immediately if someone is experiencing a rapid, strong pulse, is feeling delirious, becomes unconscious or has a body temperature above 102°F.

Recommendations to prevent health affects of hot weather are:

- Drink plenty of non-alcoholic liquids
- Reduce strenuous activities
- Be less active during the hottest part of the day
- Take cool showers/baths frequently
- Wear lightweight, light colored clothing. Wear a hat when outdoors.
- Check frequently on those at high risk
- Never leave children, the elderly, or pets in enclosed automobiles even if the windows are partially open. Temperatures can quickly rise to life threatening levels.

Staying in an air conditioned environment is often the best option and there are a number of public places with air conditioning where people can go to cool off during the day. If your home does not have air conditioning, go to a store, shopping mall, library or other place with air conditioning. Even a few hours spent in air conditioning can help your body stay cooler when you go back into the heat.

You can find additional tips on staying safe in hot weather at:
www.cdph.ca.gov/Pages/PreventionTipsForHotSummer.pdf
www.cdc.gov/Features/ExtremeHeat/

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