

TIPS FOR STAYING COOL IN THE SUMMERTIME

SENIORS ARE AT INCREASED RISK IN THE SUMMER TIME

Seniors and those with chronic medical conditions often have difficulty regulating their body temperature. This can make the summer months a more dangerous time. It is important to have strategies to avoid overheating or becoming dehydrated.

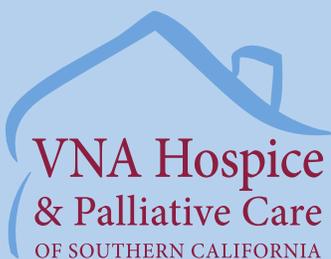
40%

The University of Chicago Medical Center recently found that 40% of the heat related deaths in the United States were among those over 65 years old.

WHY ARE SENIORS VULNERABLE?

- Their bodies may not adjust to sudden changes in temperature quickly.
- Medical conditions can change the body's ability to respond to heat appropriately.
- Prescription medications can interfere with the body's ability to sweat and regulate temperature.

Source: CDC



HOW TO STAY COOL

Avoiding strenuous activity and staying indoors during the hottest hours of the day is sound advice for people of all ages. For older adults, these tips can help reduce the risks that come with extreme heat:

1. Drink plenty of cool water and avoid alcohol and caffeine. Don't wait until you feel thirsty; stay hydrated throughout the day.
2. Cool snacks such as fruit popsicles or frozen grapes could be a healthy and cooling way to beat the heat.
3. Lighter, cooler meals are better than heavy, hot entrées. Cold salads and sandwiches are the best choice.
4. Use a cool washcloth on the back of your neck when you're feeling overheated. Placing your feet in a pan of cool water is also a good way to cool down. (Just make sure it's not too cold!)
5. Keep the house as cool as possible. Keeping the shades closed during the hottest parts of the day helps your fans and air conditioners run more efficiently and less expensively.
6. Wear light layers of clothing so it is easy to adjust to an increase in temperature. Cool cotton fabrics are lightweight and breathable. Avoid heavier polyester fabrics.
7. Visiting a senior center, shopping mall or coffee shop is a great way to find a cool, air-conditioned environment (that is free!).
8. Cool showers, baths and washcloths can help you feel cooler quickly. For maximum cooling, keep the water just below body temperature.
9. There are inexpensive cooling products that you can keep in your freezer. Avoid direct contact with the skin if you are using ice or ice pads.
10. Consider renting air-conditioning units and purchase low-cost fans to stay cool on a budget.