

## Heat kills more Australians than any natural disaster

Days of extreme heat and heatwaves are periods of unusually hot weather that can cause significant health problems. Extreme heat can affect anybody.

Heat-related health problems include dehydration, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and life-threatening heat stroke. Extreme heat can trigger heart attack, stroke, kidney impairment, and worsen respiratory illnesses, especially in the presence of pollution/smoke.

Certain individuals are particularly at-risk, including: people over the age of 65, babies and young children, pregnant women, people with acute or chronic health problems and people who are socially isolated. Recognising early symptoms of heat-related health problems and taking action is crucial.

If needed call Nurse-On-Call on 1300 60 60 24, or contact Victorian Virtual Emergency Department at <https://www.vved.org.au/> or in an emergency call 000.



To receive this publication in an accessible format phone **1300 761 874**, using the National Relay Service **13 36 77** if required, or email the Emergency Management Branch [extreme.weather@health.vic.gov.au](mailto:extreme.weather@health.vic.gov.au)

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## Extreme heat is dangerous

In Victoria, extreme heat risks more than sunburn, it can worsen medical conditions or cause potentially fatal health problems like heatstroke. To keep you and others safe, it's important to prepare early.

Learn more at [betterhealth.vic.gov.au/extreme-heat](https://betterhealth.vic.gov.au/extreme-heat)



## Stay safe in the heat with these four simple tips:



### Stay cool on hot days

Stay cool at home.

- Use air conditioning or a fan
- Wear light and loose clothing
- Keep skin wet, using a spray bottle or damp sponge and by taking cool showers
- Block heat entering your home with blinds and curtains if air temperature is warmer indoors than outdoors
- If you need to go out, consider spending some time in cool places or air-conditioned buildings.



### Avoid becoming dehydrated on hot days

Keep drinking fluids before you feel thirsty, especially if outdoors and performing physical activity.

- Take a full bottle of water with you whenever you leave the house.
- Watch for signs of dehydration like feeling thirsty, lightheaded, having a dry mouth, tiredness, having dark coloured, strong-smelling urine or passing less urine than usual.



### Plan ahead

When planning outdoor activities:

- Cancel or reschedule activities for a cooler time of the day.
- Check the weather forecast regularly

Monitor Bureau of Meteorology Heatwave warnings at [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au) or via the Bureau's app and subscribe to receive the Department of Health Heat health warnings at [www.health.vic.gov.au/subscribe](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/subscribe).



### Check in with family, friends and neighbours

A quick call can make a big difference. Let people know you are OK or check in on those at increased risk or who may need your support during days of extreme heat.

People most at risk include:

- Those over the age of 65
- Pregnant women, young children and babies
- People with acute or chronic health problems
- People who are socially isolated.

## Get ready for extreme heat

Extreme heat days are becoming more frequent and intense. To protect you and your loved ones, it's important to prepare early.