

Heat Waves in San Francisco?

Few people view San Francisco as a place of concern for extreme heat events, because of its temperate climate. But climate change models project that heat waves will increase in frequency and severity. Further, the city showed specific vulnerabilities during the 2006 California heat wave, due to our lack of physiologic and technologic adaptations for extreme heat events.

San Franciscans rarely experience extreme heat events, so our bodies have a more difficult time adapting which can increase the risk of heat related illness and death. We also have less technologic adaptations, like central air conditioning, because of the typically cooler climate and older housing stock.

How to Take Care of Yourself

- Stay somewhere cool
- Drink plenty of water
- Wear light clothing & hats
- Avoid being outside during the hottest hours of the day: 10 am -4 pm
- Avoid strenuous activity
- Avoid sugar, alcohol, caffeine, foods high in protein

Heat-Related Illnesses

Heat Exhaustion

paleeness, tiredness, weakness, dizziness, headache, fainting, muscle cramps, heavy sweating

Heat Stroke

extremely high body temperature 103°+; difficulty breathing; red, hot, dry skin (with no sweating); rapid, strong pulse; throbbing headache, dizziness; nausea; mental confusion; delirium; hallucinations; chills; unconsciousness

How You Can Help

- Check in on neighbors, family, or friends who are at increased risk, especially those who live alone and, if needed, offer to help them get to a cool location.
- Ensure they have access to plenty of water, ice in their freezer, and a fan if possible.
- Encourage them not to move around too much, especially in the sun.
- If you need additional resources, call 311, or 911 if it's an emergency.

Who is at Risk

- People aged 65+
- Infants and young children
- People with diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, mental illness, developmental disability, dementia, respiratory conditions, asthma, obesity
- People who are outdoors for long periods of time
- People without access to air conditioning
- People living alone and who are socially isolated
- People who consume diuretics (substance that increases urination and water loss), such as caffeine and alcohol or illegal drugs