

# tec the Environment Centre (tec)

## Keeping Cool and Well

---

Over-heating can impact health and wellbeing. This document gives suggestions for how to stay safe in hot weather, in particular during heatwaves. A heatwave is defined as when average temperatures reach 30°C during the day and 15°C overnight for at least two consecutive days – and is most likely between June and September.

### Keep yourself cool

**Drink plenty of cold drinks**, avoiding excess alcohol, caffeine and high sugar drinks and eat cold foods, particularly fruit and vegetables with a high water content.

**Slow down**; and don't exert yourself physically wherever possible.

**Remove unnecessary clothing**; wear as little as possible indoors and wear light-coloured, loose-fitting clothes if you go out.

**Cool your skin** with water, whether this is a cool bath or shower, splashing your face or using a wet cloth.

### Be prepared

**Look out for friends and family** who might be vulnerable to hot weather; especially young children, older people or those suffering from illnesses. Find out if they have enough food, water and medications and are managing to keep cool at home.

**Stay tuned** for weather forecasts or you can check with the [Met Office](#) for updates on hot weather alerts. Heatwaves can affect other services; power, water and transport, and make air pollution worse – so keep an eye on the news.

**Check out the NHS [website](#)** for advice on summer health; or you can call 111 for non-emergencies.

### Going outside

**Check the forecast** and plan ahead to avoid situations where you may become too hot, and take plenty of water with you.

**Dress for the heat** if you go outside; head wear, sunglasses, sunscreen and covering skin with clothing can protect from the sun.

**Avoid the hottest part of the day** (11am-3pm) and if you do go out keep in the shade, avoid vigorous physical activity and ensure family members and pets are not left in cars.

## Cooling your home

Find the coolest place in your house so you know where to go to keep cool, particularly for sleeping.

**Shade windows** and shut them when it is hotter outside. When it is cooler outside open windows (if safe to do so) and try and get air flowing through the house.

**Keep rooms cool** by using shades, reflective material on the windows, or light coloured curtains.

**Use electric fans** if temperatures are below 35°C; it is best not to aim them directly at your body, and keep yourself hydrated.

**Turn off** lights and electrical equipment not in use, and make sure central heating is turned off. Check fridges and freezers are working properly.

**Take a break** from the heat, this might be in a cool part of the house, a shaded green outdoor space or even by visiting another building, such as a place of worship, library or supermarket which may be cooler.

**Look out for causes of overheating** when buying or renting, particularly if you are vulnerable to hot weather, and consider avoiding or reducing them. If you are insulating your home, ask for advice about preventing overheating.

## Medical Assistance

**Prescription medicines**; make sure medicines are stored below 25°C or in the fridge. Some medicines can reduce your tolerance of heat, so get medical advice.

**Be alert** to signs of heat related illness in yourself or others – most people should recover by cooling skin with water, lying down in a cool place and rehydrating – if you are still concerned get help, call NHS 111 or in an emergency 999.

## Give us a call

For more advice and information please call us on Freephone 0800 804 8601.

Call 0800 804 8601 for free, independent and local advice