

## Quick Tips: Staying Active in Hot Weather

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### Get started

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Summer is a great time for being active. Even if you live where it gets hot or humid, there are ways you can stay in shape year-round. But make sure to take precautions when you are active outside.

If you have heart problems or other health issues, or if you have not been active for a long time, check with your doctor before you start a new activity.

### Be safe in the heat

If the temperature is lower than 80°F (27°C), you usually can be active outside without taking extra precautions. It depends on how active you already are and how used to hot weather you are.

But anytime you exercise, it's a good idea to take these normal precautions:

- Drink plenty of water. This is very important when it's hot out and when you do intense exercise.
- Don't exercise as hard when it's hot. Take rest breaks. Exercise more slowly than usual or for a shorter time.
- Stay in the shade when you can.
- Avoid exercising during the hottest times of the day.
- Wear light-colored, breathable clothes.
- Watch for signs of heat exhaustion, such as nausea, dizziness, cramps, and headache. If you notice any signs, stop your activity right away, cool off, and drink fluids.

When the temperature gets above 80°F (27°C), consider the heat and the humidity. Both can put you at risk for heat-related illness. The hotter or more humid it is, the higher your risk. For example, if the humidity is 60% (moderate):

- Be careful when you exercise in temperatures of 80°F (27°C) to 85°F (29°C). Find shade, take regular breaks, and drink plenty of fluids.
- Experts advise being extremely careful between about 85°F (29°C) and 91°F (32.8°C).
- Conditions are considered extremely dangerous at temperatures over 91°F (32.8°C).

When it is more humid, you should be careful at even lower temperatures. Higher humidity can make it feel hotter, since your body cannot cool off as well by sweating. This puts you at a greater risk for illness. For more information, see the website [www.nws.noaa.gov](http://www.nws.noaa.gov) and search for "heat index."

Older adults and children are at a higher risk for heat-related illness and should be extra cautious. Remind children to drink plenty of fluids before, during, and after activity.

If you are overweight, have health problems, take medicines, or use alcohol, you may be at a higher risk for heat-related illness. You may also have trouble if you're not used to exercising in warmer weather.

In hot weather, drink plenty of fluids before, during, and after activity. Water or sports drinks are best. This helps to prevent dehydration and heat-related illness. Water is all you need if you are exercising for less than

an hour. For longer exercise periods, sports drinks contain carbohydrate and minerals called electrolytes that may help your endurance and keep you from getting muscle cramps.

**Call 911 or other emergency services immediately** if you have stopped sweating or have other signs of heatstroke, such as a fast heart rate, passing out, high body temperature, feeling confused, or having no energy. Heatstroke is very dangerous.

## Outdoors

When it's hot or humid, be active during the cooler times of day. Find shaded areas, like parks with big trees, and drink plenty of fluids. You have less chance of getting too hot if you do lighter exercise, like walking. Be sure to wear sunscreen.

- Take morning or evening walks. Walking the dog or walking with a partner helps you make it part of your routine.
- Go for a bike ride. Find shaded areas, and ride during cooler times of day.
- Go swimming on hot days. This is a healthy family activity for summer.
- Do light yard work or gardening. You'll burn calories while you keep the yard looking good.
- Wash your car. This gets you outside and helps you burn calories. Give yourself a splash to stay cool.

## Indoors

- Go for walks at the mall. Use a phone app or a pedometer to count your steps. You can set walking goals to help you stay motivated.
- Use light weights or stretch bands at home. You'll stay fit while you watch TV or listen to music. Lift cans of food if you don't want to buy weights.
- Use an online exercise video or a smartphone app. You can stay in shape while you stay cool indoors.
- Go dancing or take dance lessons. Or just turn on some music and dance in your living room. This gets you moving so you burn calories.
- Do indoor housework like dusting, vacuuming, or washing the windows. This helps you stay active while you keep your home looking good.
- On trips, stay at hotels with fitness centers or swimming pools. Make time for a workout. Take a jump rope to use in your room.
- Join a gym or health club. You can take classes or use machines, like treadmills, stair-climbers, or stationary bikes. Many cities have community centers that offer affordable fitness classes. If you have health problems, ask your doctor before you use machines or take classes.
- Join sports programs in your community or at work. Many cities offer indoor sports like basketball, volleyball, and soccer.

## Credits

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