

# Heatwave: Stay safe and healthy

A heatwave is a period of unusually hot weather in an area that lasts 3 days or more. Heat puts stress on our bodies and hot nights make it harder to recover. Heatwaves kill more Australians compared to any other natural disaster.

If you plan to exercise or participate in sports during a heatwave, you need to take extra precautions to avoid developing a heat-related illness.

## Your checklist to stay safe and healthy during a heatwave:

### Stay informed

- Stay up to date on heatwave alerts ([emergency.wa.gov.au](https://www.emergency.wa.gov.au)), listen to the radio and television weather reports.

### Is your health at higher risk?

- Do not undertake exercise if you feel unwell or if you are recovering from a recent illness. If you have chronic medical conditions, talk to your healthcare practitioner about exercising and competing during heatwaves.
- Continue to take your medication and follow your fluid intake requirements as advised by your healthcare practitioner unless instructed otherwise.
- If your medication has been affected by heat (such as loss of power for a refrigerated item), seek advice from your healthcare practitioner and/or pharmacist.

### Stay in contact

- Know who and when to call for help.
- If you are at a sporting event:
  - identify event first-aid procedures.
  - check on other competitors throughout the day.

### Drink plenty of fluids

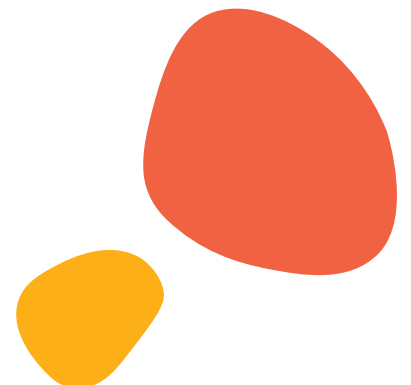
- Drink plenty of fluids regularly throughout the day - this includes water, diluted juice (mixed with water) and low sugar electrolyte or sports drinks.
- Avoid drinks containing caffeine such as coffee, tea, and caffeinated energy drinks.

### Know your fitness level and reduce intensity

- Ensure you have a high level of physical fitness before exercising during heatwaves and reduce your training effort intensity.

### Stay safe outside

- Avoid exercising or competing during the hottest parts of the day. Early morning or late evening temperatures may be cooler.
- Wear lightweight, light-coloured and loose-fitting clothing.
- Wear a wide brim hat and sunglasses, apply sunscreen and try to stay in the shade. Carry a water bottle with you and know where you can find drinking water nearby.
- Know a cool space you can go to after exercising or competing. Cool down by wetting your skin with cool water using a spray bottle or wet cloth.



# Know the signs of heat-related illness and act fast



## Dehydration

Feeling thirsty, a dry mouth, and darker urine.



## Treatment

Rest in a cool area, remove excess clothing and drink water.



## Heat stress

Pale skin, excess sweating or no sweating, and dark urine.



## Treatment

Lie in cool area and remove excess clothing. Apply wet cloths, cold water or wrapped icepacks to the skin (armpits and groin) and drink water. Call triple zero (000) if symptoms do not improve in 30 minutes.



## Heat stroke

Confusion, incoherent speech, abnormal walking, seizures or coma.



Heat stroke is a life-threatening medical emergency. Immediately call triple zero (000).

If you or someone you know is ill, contact your regular health care provider or call Healthdirect Australia on 1800 022 222. In an emergency go to your nearest hospital or call triple zero (000).

For more information, visit [healthywa.wa.gov.au](https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au)

