

Healthy in the summer heat



Advancing global warming and a higher number of days with extreme heat stress pose major challenges for society.

A heatwave occurs when temperatures rise above 30°C for several days and do not drop below 20°C at night. The human body is exposed to high levels of stress during the day and cannot recover at night. For healthy adults in Germany, a normal lifestyle and adequate fluid and food intake generally pose no health risks, even during prolonged heatwaves.

Particularly at risk are

- single elderly people and those in need of care
- pregnant women, infants and young children
- people with memory problems who are dependent on the help of others
- people taking certain medications (e.g. tranquillisers, dehydrating and anti-hypertensive drugs)
- chronically ill people (e.g. with neurological, cardiovascular, metabolic and infectious diseases)
- people with fever
- people with known heat adaptation disorders
- disabled people
- working outdoors and playing sports
- people in special circumstances (e.g. homeless people, people with addictions).

Important tips when it's hot



Drink enough

- 2-3 litres a day
- especially water, unsweetened teas or juice spritzers



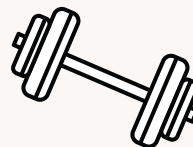
Eat healthy

- Eat light meals
- Eat fruit and vegetables, especially leafy salads



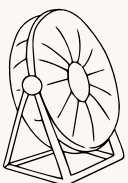
Avoid heat

- stay in the shade
- do not go outdoors during the hottest time (afternoon)



Avoid exertion

- exercise in the morning/evening hours
- take sufficient breaks



Keep your home cool

- ventilate in the morning when it is cooler outside than inside
- avoid direct sunlight



Take care of yourself and others

- heed heat warnings and prepare for a heat wave
- protect vulnerable groups in particular

Health hazards due to heat

How can you recognise heat-related health problems? The first symptoms are not always easy for the untrained eye to spot: Those affected feel light-headed, some experience dizziness. Typical complaints in the heat are:



Dehydration

Sweating and insufficient fluid intake cause a noticeable lack of fluids in the body. This is characterised by thirst, dry skin, tiredness, confusion, headaches and muscle cramps.

What to do:

Drink plenty of fluids and eat food containing water. Provide the body with extra minerals (green vegetables, fruit, eggs, nuts, cheese, milk, salt).

Heat exhaustion

When it's hot, we sweat more than usual. In heat exhaustion, this significant loss of fluid causes a drop in blood pressure. This often leads to severe thirst, clammy skin, rapid breathing, nausea, dizziness and fatigue.

What to do:

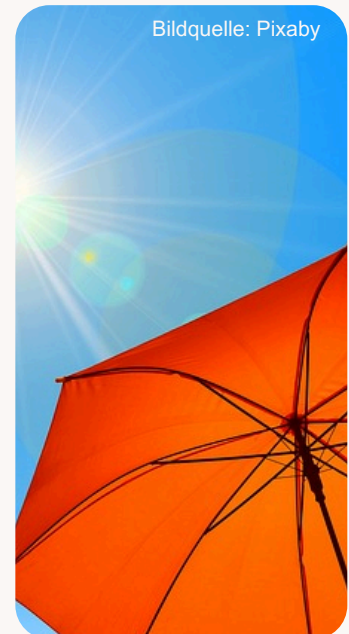
Drink plenty of fluids and cool your body. If your condition does not improve or your body temperature rises above 38 °C (100 °F), contact your doctor.

Sunstroke

Sunstroke is caused by too much exposure to the sun. Symptoms include head and neck pain, dizziness and nausea.

What to do:

Move the affected person to a shady and cool place, elevate the upper body and check breathing and consciousness.



Heat stroke

Very high temperatures can also cause heatstroke. The body temperature rises above 40°C, the skin is hot and dry and consciousness may be impaired.

What to do:

Heat stroke is life-threatening. Immediately call 112 and try to cool the body.

- Take care of yourself and those around you -

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