

Heatstroke

What is it?

Heatstroke happens when your body gets too hot. It is more common in summer due to the hot and humid weather. It is the most harmful heat-related illness. If left untreated, heatstroke can damage your brain, heart, kidneys and muscles.

Anyone can get heatstroke but older people, children and people who work or live mostly outdoors are at a higher risk. People who are pregnant or breastfeeding, are overweight or obese, or have a medical condition are also at a higher risk of getting heatstroke.

Symptoms of heatstroke include:

- Nausea and dizziness
- Headache and muscle cramps
- Hot, dry, red skin
- In severe cases, there can be confusion, seizures and loss of consciousness

What questions could I ask my doctor?

- How can I prepare for hot weather?
- Am I at risk for heatstroke?
- How can I avoid heatstroke?



What can I do?

The best way to manage heatstroke is to avoid it. Prepare for heatwaves if you can.

If you feel you are at risk of heatstroke, take steps to stay cool and hydrated:

- Drink lots of water
- Stay cool indoors, or in the shade if you are outside
- Avoid activity during the hottest parts of the day, which is 11am to 3pm
- Wear loose clothing and take cool (not cold) showers

Keep in contact with friends, neighbours and relatives during a heat wave in case you or they need help. Talk to your GP if you have concerns about heatstroke and wish to know more about how to manage the risks.

When should I call an ambulance?



If you or someone you know is experiencing multiple symptoms of heatstroke, call triple zero (000) immediately.

Where can I learn more?

- **NSW Health** - Beat the heat: health.nsw.gov.au
- **Better Health Channel** - Survive the heat: betterhealth.vic.gov.au
- **Better Health Channel** - Preventing heatstroke: betterhealth.vic.gov.au