

Preparing for a heatwave

What is it?

A heatwave is when there are more than three days in a row with a temperature above 34 degrees. It often happens during the summer months. It is easy to become overheated and dehydrated during a heatwave. Heatwaves can cause heat-related illnesses, such as:

- **Heat rash:** Very itchy, red skin. It often affects the armpits, chest and elbow creases. It is not serious and can be treated at home.
- **Heat cramps:** Painful involuntary muscle spasms in the arms and legs. This can happen when you exercise in a hot environment.
- **Heat exhaustion:** The body's response to losing too much water and salt through sweating. If it is not treated, it can turn into heatstroke.
- **Heatstroke:** This is very serious and can lead to death. Call triple zero (000) if you or someone you know has symptoms of [heatstroke](#).

What can I do?

You should prepare yourself and your home before the hot weather starts. Doing these things will help:

- Talk to your GP about how heat might affect you, any medical condition you have and the medications you take
- Check the radio, TV, and online news regularly for information and advice during extreme hot weather
- Talk to your family, neighbours and friends during a heatwave in case you or they need help
- Make sure you have enough supplies to stay cool and drink water
- Think about changing your plans if they are outdoors

What questions could I ask my doctor?

- What symptoms should I look out for?*
- How do I stay safe in the heat?*
- What will I need during a heatwave?*



What supports are available?

Bureau of Meteorology: Heatwave warning service

For information about how you can prepare for heatwave conditions, visit bom.gov.au/australia/heatwave

Support your mental health

If the heat affects your mental health, you can get help.

Lifeline: Call 13 11 14

NSW Mental Health Line: Call 1800 011 51

Head to Health: Call 1800 595 212 or visit headtohealth.gov.au

Where can I learn more?

- **Australian Red Cross** - Heatwaves and hot weather: redcross.org.au
- **NSW Government** - Preparing for heatwaves: nsw.gov.au