Health advice for hot weather
during the COVID-19 outbreak

Every year, high temperatures affect the health of many people, particularly older people, infants, people who work outdoors and the chronically ill. Heat can trigger exhaustion and heat stroke, and can aggravate existing conditions – such as cardiovascular, respiratory, kidney or mental diseases. The adverse health effects of hot weather are largely preventable through good public health practice, while also following the advice to protect yourself from coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

Keep cool in the heat
During periods of hot weather, it is important to keep cool to avoid the negative health effects of heat.

Keep out of the heat.
Avoid going out and doing strenuous activity during the hottest time of day. Take advantage of special shopping times for vulnerable groups whenever available. Stay in the shade, do not leave children or animals in parked vehicles, and if necessary and possible, spend 2–3 hours of the day in a cool place while respecting physical distance of at least 1 meter.

Keep your home cool.
Use the night air to cool down your home. Reduce the heat load inside the apartment or house during the day by using blinds or shutters and turning off as many electrical devices as possible.
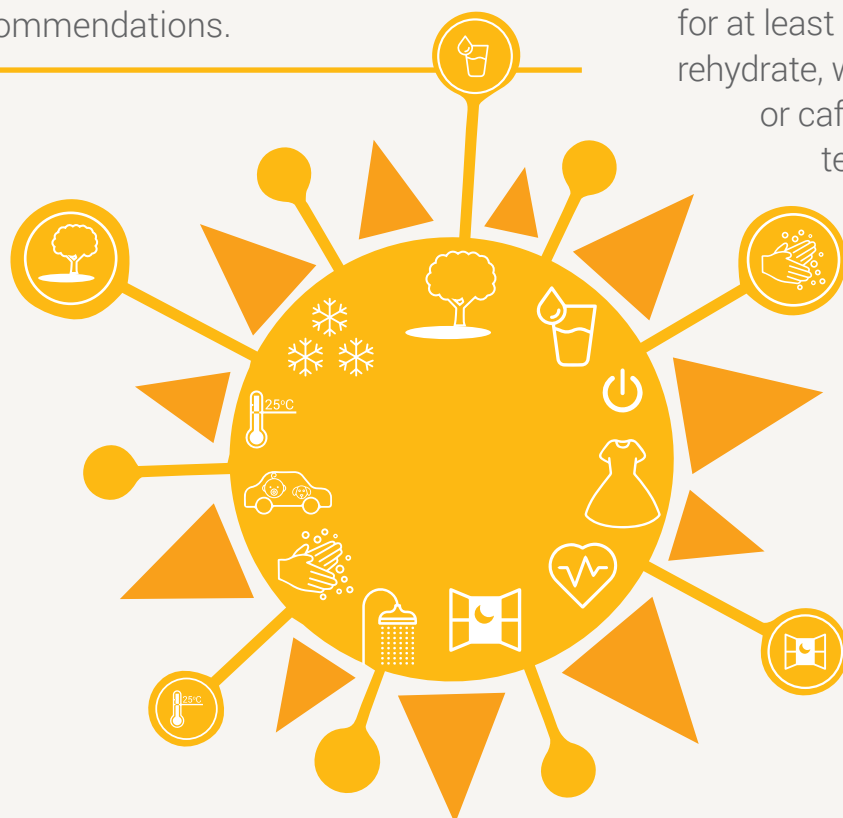
Keep your body cool and hydrated.
Use light and loose-fitting clothing and bed linen, take cool showers or baths, and drink water regularly, while avoiding sugary, alcoholic or caffeinated drinks.

Keep cool during the COVID-19 outbreak.
Avoid exposure to the sun or to temperatures higher than 25°C, as there is no evidence that this prevents or cures COVID-19, and it increases your risk of sunburn and heat-related illness. You can catch COVID-19 no matter how sunny or hot the weather is, so protect yourself and others by washing your hands regularly, coughing into your folded elbow or a tissue, and avoiding touching your face.

While taking care of yourself, plan to check on family, friends and neighbours who spend much of their time alone. Vulnerable people might need assistance on hot days, and if anyone you know is at risk, help them to get advice and support while respecting physical distancing recommendations.

If you or others feel unwell – dizzy, weak, anxious, intensely thirsty or have a headache – seek help. Move to a cool place as soon as possible, and measure your body temperature. Be careful that you do not mistake hyperthermia for fever. If there is doubt, rest in a cool environment for at least 30 minutes and drink water to rehydrate, while avoiding sugary, alcoholic or caffeinated drinks. If the body temperature remains high, it is probably fever and you should consult a health expert. If the body temperature falls and the individual feels better after resting in a cool environment, it is probably related to heat stress.

Older people, and people with pre-existing medical conditions (such as asthma, diabetes and heart disease) should pay greater attention to their health as they are more vulnerable to both the effects of heat and to COVID-19 complications.

If you have painful muscular spasms, rest immediately in a cool place and drink oral rehydration solutions containing electrolytes. Seek help if the heat cramps last more than an hour. Consult your doctor if you feel unusual symptoms or if symptoms persist, or if you suspect a fever. If someone has hot dry skin and delirium, convulsions or is unconscious, call a doctor or an ambulance immediately.

World Health Organization
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR **Europe**

More information is available at the links below:

Public health advice on preventing health effects of heat
http://www.euro.who.int/en/public-health-advice-on-preventing-health-effects-of-heat

WHO save lives: clean your hands in the context of COVID-19
https://www.who.int/infection-prevention/campaigns/clean-hands/WHO_HH-Community-Campaign_finalv3.pdf

Extreme Heat and COVID-19
https://www.ghhin.org/heat-and-covid-19