



## Warm Climate Activities & Advisement

With the warmer months, we want to reinforce the importance of being proactive in providing a safe environment and wellbeing for your congregation members and guests. While you have many ministry programs running, namely day care, day camps, vacation bible school, etc., we want to heighten your awareness of four prevalent risks associated with warmer climates and outdoor activities in this memo: heat exhaustion, heat stroke, insect problems and food safety.

It is of the utmost importance that we all remain aware of your surroundings and the constituencies you are serving. Please take some time to review the following general tips, especially those of you participating in ministry programs within the church; you might also find that it is relevant to share personally with your family and friends.

Here are the top six tactics that could help reduce a potential incident:

1. **Acclimatize.** This means allowing the body to adjust to the heat naturally. The best way to do this is to gradually increase the time you spend in the heat, until you reach the total amount of time desired.
2. **Drink before you are thirsty.** A person's sense of thirst kicks in only after significant loss of fluids. Make sure a person consumes plenty of fluids during the day. Preferably water but drinks such as milk and decaffeinated drinks will help. The body can lose as much as three gallons of fluid a day while working in hot, humid weather. As a rule of thumb, a person should drink at least 8oz. every 15 to 30 minutes during activities on hot days.
3. **Take breaks** — use them to drink or spray down with a hose or sprinkler. A person should avoid

caffeinated drinks, which can lead to dehydration. They should also wear light-colored, loose fitting clothing and use sunscreen of at least SPF 15.

4. **Eat lightly.** Light nutritious meals, preferable cold, are better due to the fact they are easier to digest. Fatty foods are hard to digest and hot weather increases digestion time.
5. **Wear suitable clothing for the weather.** You should wear breathable fabrics and dress in layers as an event may start in the morning with a cooler climate, a rise in temperature in the afternoon and a lower temperature in the afternoon or evening. Layering will allow a person to dress and undress in a necessary fashion.

In the case of an unfortunate event and a person succumbs to the heat, here are the heat-related illnesses that may be occurring and strategies to assess and treat:

### HEAT EXHAUSTION AND HEAT STRESS

Heat exhaustion is a serious disorder that develops when the body loses more fluid through sweating than taking in. This occurs when the body cannot cool itself properly during periods of extreme heat and excessive sweating, without adequate replacement of fluid and salt. There are mild warning signs to remain aware of to include heat cramps, fainting, and prickly heat rash. Heat cramps tend to attack the muscles that do the hardest work. Fainting lets you know your body is having difficulty coping with the heat. Prickly Heat rash is caused when sweat can't evaporate and the sweat ducts become clogged.

### SIGNS OF HEAT EXHAUSTION AND HEAT STRESS

- Profuse sweating
- Clammy Skin
- Muscle cramps/aches
- Pale or flushed skin
- Fatigue or weakness
- Nausea, Vomiting & Diarrhea
- Headache
- Feeling faint or dizzy
- Near normal body temperature

**FIRST AID**

- Move the person to shade or a cool place, place cool cloths, cold water or ice packs on their skin.
- Have person lie on their back with elevated feet and let them rest
- If conscious, give half a glass of water or sport drink every 15 minutes
- Get medical help if the person is not improving

**HEAT STROKE**

This is a medical emergency! This occurs when the body's heat regulating system breaks down under stress and sweating stops. Unless the victim receives quick treatment, death can occur.

**SIGNS OF HEAT STROKE**

- Body temperature greater than 105 F
- Mental status change, confused or delirious behavior
- Seizures, loss of consciousness or coma
- No sweating or sweating profusely
- Hot, dry flushed skin

**FIRST AID**

- Immediately call for medical help and start first aid.
- Move victim to a cool place and attempt to cool the victim quickly by giving a cool bath or fanning.
- Offer a conscious person a half of glass of water or sport drink every 15 minutes.

Not only does a person need to remain aware of heat related illnesses, they should also be concerned with insect problems and food safety. We want for people to enjoy the warmer summer months however, it is important for them to remain aware of health concerns.

**Insect Problems & Relief**

To avoid insect bites, an over-the-counter repellent is suggested. If purchasing a repellent is not an option, try to avoid open beverages that contain sweetener. Sweetened beverages, like soda and juice, attract stinging insects. Standing water is a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Empty or cover the pool at the end of the

day, and don't leave any source that may contain standing water.

Always wear shoes when outside and attempt to dress in long pants, and a light weight, long sleeved shirt to cover the skin. Also, wear light-colored clothing.

The first thing to do when stung by a bee or wasp is to look at the spot where you were bitten, to determine if there's any stinger remaining. If one is present, use a firm object to sweep across the area, and pull the stinger out. Do not squeeze or pinch the skin to remove the stinger as this will cause additional venom to be released into the bite.

For immediate insect bite relief, use soap and water to clean the area of the sting. Treat any reaction by applying a cool compress, or ice. To relieve the redness and pain, adding hydrocortisone to the affected area will help. If a severe allergic reaction develops such as difficulty breathing or swallowing, call 911 and seek emergency care immediately.

For those in the northeast and upper midwest, be on the look-out for ticks carrying Lyme disease. This occurs especially in wooded areas.

**FOOD SAFETY**

Food borne illness does increase during the summer. Most food borne bacteria grow fastest at temperatures from 90°F to 110°F. Bacteria also need moisture to flourish, and summer weather is often hot and humid. You can fight back by following these four simple steps:

**Clean:** Wash hands and surfaces often.

Unwashed hands are a prime cause of food borne illness.

**Separate:** Don't Cross-Contaminate

Cross-contamination during preparation, grilling, and serving food is a prime cause of food borne illness.

**Cook:** Cook to proper temperatures

Food is safely cooked when it is heated for a long enough time and at a high enough temperature to kill harmful bacteria that causes food borne illness.

**Chill:** Refrigerate Promptly

Holding food at an unsafe temperature is a prime cause of food borne illness. Keep cold food cold! Food left out of refrigeration for more than 2 hours may not be safe

to eat. Above 90°F food should not be left out for over 1 hour. If you have any doubts, throw it out!

Please feel free to reference the Food Safety MPM for additional information.

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