

Heat Waves & HEALTH

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Pan American
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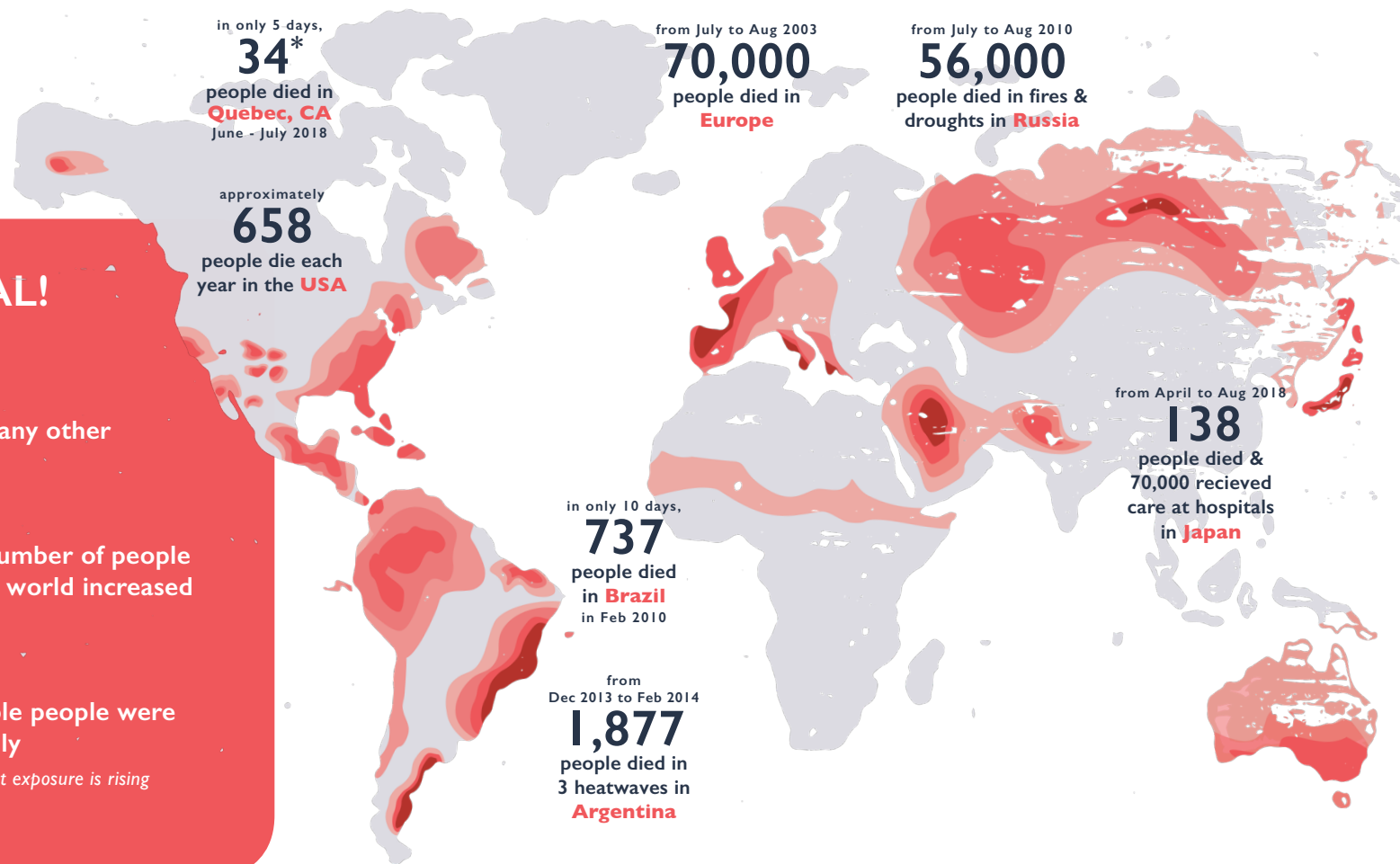
Heat Waves

& HEALTH

THE THREAT IS REAL! BE PREPARED.

- Heat kills more people than any other climate-related hazard
NOAA, USA (avg. 2008-2017)
- Between 2000 & 2016, the number of people exposed to heatwaves in the world increased by at least 125 million
WHO, 2018
- In 2017, 157 million vulnerable people were exposed to heatwaves globally
Proportion of population vulnerable to heat exposure is rising globally, The Lancet 2018

* Excess heat-related deaths



From December 2018 to February 2019, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, & Mexico issued heatwave alerts almost concurrently, something not seen before in the Americas.

As of July 2019, heatwaves were continuing or expected to increase in North & Central America and the Caribbean.

HEAT EXHAUSTION

KNOW WHAT TO DO

Heat exhaustion is a moderate to severe stage of heat illness related to your body's efforts to reduce temperature. It occurs most frequently in healthy young people engaged in outdoor activities.

Recognize the Symptoms

- Heavy Sweating
- Cold pale skin
- Temperature below 40°C (104°F)
- Faintness or dizziness
- Headache
- Fast breathing
- Rapid & weak pulse
- Muscle cramps



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Take Action!

- Move to a cool place
- Lie down
- Remove excess of clothing
- Apply cool wet cloths to body
- Sip water

IF SYMPTOMS LAST MORE THAN 1 HOUR, GET MEDICAL HELP —
Heat exhaustion can turn into heat stroke



HEAT STROKE

KNOW WHAT TO DO

Heat stroke is the severest form of heat illness caused by your body being unable to regulate temperature. Those with chronic health conditions are most at risk.

Recognize the Symptoms

- Hot, dry skin
- Temperature above 40°C (104°F)
- Rapid, strong pulse
- Unconsciousness or coma



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Take Action!

- **CALL** the emergency line immediately
- Move person to a cool place
- Apply cool wet cloths to body
- **DO NOT** give anything to drink

HEAT STROKE KILLS —

It is a serious medical emergency that requires hospital care



PREVENT EXTREME HEAT EFFECTS

Keep Out of the Heat

- Stay indoors during hours of extreme heat
- If you are outside, stay in the shade or a cool place
- Avoid strenuous physical activity
- Spend part of the day in a cool place (if not your home, an air-conditioned public building)

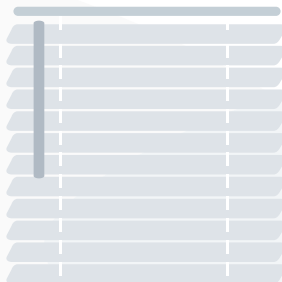
Keep Your Home Cool

- Close window curtains/shades during the day
- Open windows at night (if it is safe & cooler outside)
- Move to the coolest room in the house, as needed
- Hang wet towels to cool the room down
- If you use air conditioning, keep doors & windows closed to conserve electricity and prevent a community wide outage

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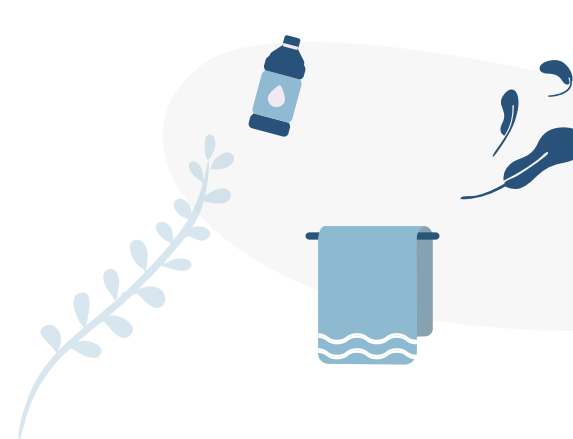
Keep Cool & Hydrated



- Take cool baths or use wet cloths to keep cool
- Wear light, loose fitting clothes made of breathable materials & light colors to reflect the heat
- Use light bed cloths to avoid heat accumulation
- Drink plenty of water every two hours, before getting thirsty
- Avoid alcohol and caffeine as these can cause dehydration
- Eat fruits & vegetables and avoid heavy meals

Help Others!

- Talk with your family, friends and neighbors about what to do during a heatwave
- Elderly or sick people living alone should be checked on daily
- If a person requires medication, check with a health care professional on how exposure to extreme heat might affect them
- Don't leave kids, elders, and pets alone under the sun or in vehicles



Tip!

Follow warnings
and watches
issued by Weather
Services and Health
Authorities

PREVENT EXTREME HEAT EFFECTS

Are You More Vulnerable?

VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS INCLUDE:

- People with acute and chronic health conditions
- Elderly (older than 65 years)
- Pregnant women
- Children
- Pets
- Athletes, outdoor workers, & the homeless

TIPS FOR PATIENTS

- Visit your doctor for recommendations before the heatwave
- Keep your dose unless recommended by your doctor and avoid self medication
- Be aware of effects that your medicines and high temperatures may cause to your body
- Keep control of your vitals
- Drink plenty of water even if you are not thirsty, and avoid coffee, alcohol and psychoactive substances
- Stay active indoors, and remember to keep in touch with your family & friends

Pre-existing Health Conditions

- Diabetes & other endocrine diseases
- High blood pressure & heart failure
- Asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- Renal failure & kidney stones
- Parkinson's disease, epilepsy, dementia, depression
- Acute diseases, e.g. diarrhea, acute respiratory illness
- Physical or cognitive disabilities
- Overweight

Medications Affected by Heat

- Diuretics
- Anticholinergic drugs
- Sympathomimetic drugs
- Antiadrenergic drugs
- Antipsychotics
- Anticonvulsants
- Antidepressants
- Muscle relaxants
- Allergy medication
- Other drugs: antiemetics, anti-vertigo

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To learn more, visit www.paho.org/heatwave-preparedness



STAY CONNECTED!
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