

Heat Wave

The warm Texas sunIt is what calls people home to Texas; it is why some people relocate to Texas or want to vacation here. Texas is also a place people wish they never relocated to. The Texas heat can be very dangerous and very hard to adjust to.

As we approach the hottest part of the year, people need to be aware of heat strokes. In recent years, excessive heat has caused more deaths than any other weather events, including floods.

A heat wave is a prolonged period of excessive heat 10 or more degrees above the average normal, often combined with excessive humidity.

This newsletter is to help you beware of what to do, how to prepare, and how to help yourself and others (especially the elderly) with this oncoming heatwave.

In preparation:

- Install window air conditioners snugly; insulate if necessary
- Check air-conditioning ducts for proper insulation
- Install temporary window reflectors (for use between window and drapes), such as aluminum foil-covered cardboard, to reflect heat back outside.
- Weather strip doors and sills to keep cool air in.
- Keep storm windows up all year.
- Cover windows that receive morning or afternoon sun with drapes, shades, awnings, or louvers. Outdoor awnings or louvers can reduce the heat that enters a home by up to 80 percent

In the heat:

- Slow down. Avoid strenuous activity/work during the warmest part of the day. If you must work during the hottest part of the day use a buddy system and take frequent breaks.
- Stay indoors as much as possible.
- If air conditioning is not available, stay on the lowest floor, out of sunshine.
- Wear loose-fitting, light weight, light-colored clothing.
- Protect the face and head by wearing a wide-brimmed hat.
- Drink plenty of water regularly and often. Your body needs to stay cool.
- Drink plenty of fluids even if you don't feel thirsty.
- Eat well-balanced, light, and regular meals. Eat small meals, and eat more often. Avoid foods that are high in protein, which increase metabolic heat

Who is most at risk?

- Older people, especially those over 75
- Babies and young children

- People with a serious chronic condition, especially heart or breathing problems
- People with mobility problems- for example, people with Parkinson's disease or who have had a stroke
- People with serious mental health problems
- People on certain medications, including those that affect sweating and temperature control
- People who misuse alcohol or drugs
- People who are physically active-for example, labourers or those doing sports

Tips on helping the Elderly

- Make sure they have plenty of liquids to drink
- Go through and open all their water bottles and put the caps back on loosely
- Make sure the air-conditioning is on, not the heat
- Check on them once to twice a day
- Make sure they stay indoors during the heat of the day
- Even though elderly are cold even with the air- conditioning on make them aware they need to keep it on and keep them away from drinks filled with caffeine and sugar.
- Keep frozen treats available for them, with low sugar content. Like sugar free popsicles
Or serve fruit with high water content like watermelon.

Golden Plains Community Hospital wants you to be aware for the next few months please be very mindful of the heat, and take every precaution you can to stay cool and have plenty of fluids. If you need help paying your electric bill you can call the Salvation Army at 273-2491 or High Plains Helping Hands at 273-5601.