Health Tips: How to Stay Healthy in the Heat

By Diana Iscenko

The summer months often times means hot weather. While spending time outside is good, extremely high temperatures can be detrimental to your health. According to the CDC, more than 600 people die from extreme heat each year. Adults over 65, children under 4 and people with chronic health issues are particularly vulnerable to the effects of high heat.

It's especially crucial to be aware of how the heat can affect your health during a public health crisis, like the COVID-19 pandemic. With parts of the country still on lockdown, many people are spending as much time outside as possible. Be sure to follow health advice to ensure you are remaining healthy as

the summer temperatures get higher and higher.

No matter how you're spending your quarantine summer, here are six health tips to help you stay healthy in the summer heat.

1. Stay Hydrated

Drink water, even if you don't feel thirsty! During hot weather, your body loses more fluids through sweating. Drinking water will help replenish those lost fluids and helps your bodily functions run more smoothly. Avoid a lot of alcohol, caffeine and sugary drinks; these will dehydrate your body. Sports drinks with electrolytes and minimal sugar are a good alternative if you start to get sick of water.

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2. Wear Breathable Clothing

Clothing plays a big role in preventing you from feeling the effects of the heat. Wear loose-fitting, light-colored and breathable clothing. Loose-fitting clothes will easily allow the heat your body produces to escape. Light-colored clothes won't absorb the heat from the sun as easily as darker colors.

3. Seek Air Conditioning

If you have air conditioning in your home, make sure it's always set to "cool." Keep the filter clean so it can run as efficiently as possible. Turning on fans and closing blinds and curtains during the day can make it even cooler in your home. If you don't have air conditioning, spend time somewhere that does. This could be a friend's house or a public place, like a library or a shopping center. You can also take a drive

and turn on the air conditioning in your car.

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5. Find Shady Spots

Spend as little time in the sun as possible. When outside, try to stay in the shade to prevent your body temperature from rising too much. If you do go in the sun, be sure to wear sunscreen to avoid overheating and skin damage.

6. Schedule Outdoor Time

When you know you'll be spending time in the sun, plan to go outside during the early morning or late evening. Avoid doing strenuous activity, such as yard work or outdoor exercise, in the middle of the day. This is the hottest point in the day and may bring your body to a dangerously high temperature.

How do you keep cool over the summer? Start a conversation in the comments below.