Summertime Heat Can Be Fatal; Here Are Tips For Playing It Cool

Summer doesn't even have be officially here yet for southerners and visitors to be affected by very hot, humid weather.

playtime activities such as exercise and yard cramps in the legs, arm, back or abdomen.

work. Playing in hot weather, if you do not "play it cool," can become a health risk attributable to heat exhaustion. If you're not extra careful, the even more serious-and sometimes fatal-heat stroke can occur.

Heat exhaustion and heat stroke are caused when the body loses too much fluid and body salts by way of sweating, and the body becomes overheated. When the humidity is high, it reduces the body's ability to eliminate heat through the evaporation of sweat.

During the long days of summer, and when the weather is extremely hot and humid, you should really avoid any type of strenuous exercise and physical activity altogether, according to Rita Hatcher,

Brunswick County wellness coordinator.

But if you are planning a day of activity under the sun, be sure to drink lots of fruit juice and/or water to cut down on your body's loss of fluids. Fluid loss causes a drop in blood pressure which can make you feel

dizzy. The first symptom of heat exhaustion is fatigue and becoming hot and thirsty. In addition, dizziness, confusion, rapid or irregular Hot weather is also associated with outdoor heartbeat and headache may occur, as well as

> If you should suffer an attack of heat exhaustion, Hatcher says these are the appropriate actions to take:

> Get out of the sun and lie down so the body will stop generating heat.

Drink water and/or fruit juices to replenish the loss of fluids in your body.

If someone suffers a heat stroke, be sure to lower their body's temperature by spraying it with cold water to keep their body cool. Medical treatment should be provided as soon as possible.

Infants and the elderly are not able to eliminate heat easily, so caretakes should keep a watchful eye on them. A hot, stuffy home or apartment can cause an elderly person to suffer heat illness, and some elderly people are on

medications which can affect their cardiovascular system and thus restrict their capability to eliminate heat.

Enjoy the sun and fun by "playing it cool," and playing it smart! Practice moderation, drink plenty of fluids, and stay well.

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