

Preparation to Stay Safe During Heat Waves

My Spring To-Do List

Extremely hot weather can be dangerous. It can make medical conditions worse or cause serious heat-related illnesses. Staying hydrated, keeping cool, and having support can greatly lower your risk. When you're well-prepared, you can stay safe.

Use this personalized Spring To-Do List and Heat Safety Plan to help you prepare.

Create a support group of one or more Check-in Companions

It's very important to have a support network of nearby "Check-in Companions" (e.g. friends, family, neighbours) that you can be in touch with, so you can check in on each other during heat waves or emergencies.

- ☐ Find out who can be your Check-in Companion(s) – people you can call or who can call you during a heat wave to make sure you're both okay. If it helps, let them know your doctor recommended it. Write their name and phone number in your Heat Safety Plan.
- ☐ Make a plan for where you can stay overnight if your home gets too hot. Ask a friend, relative, or neighbour with air conditioning if you could stay with them, and write their name and phone number in your Heat Safety Plan.

Make sure you have transportation

- ☐ You may want to discuss transportation options with a family member. You can also call 211 (a 24-hour helpline that can

connect you to local social services, programs and community supports) or call your municipality to find out what local transportation options are available during a heat wave. Enter the transportation contact information in your Heat Safety Plan.

Check your medications

- ☐ Ask your pharmacist if your meds could increase your risk during a heat wave and follow their advice about how to manage that risk. See a list of medications at: cpin-rcip.com/meds

Arrange for help if you have mobility concerns

- ☐ Make arrangements for someone to be available who can help you move to a cooler area of your home or help you with cool showers/baths during a heat wave. They should be able to visit you regularly and often.

Get your home ready

- ☐ Identify the coolest area in your home. This is where you should spend most of your time during a heat wave. Plan how you can arrange the area so that you can take care of your daily activities and, if possible, sleep in this cooler space.
- ☐ Consider getting an AC. If cost is an issue, call 211 to see if there's a local agency that could help you with the cost of a portable AC. A list of programs that may offer help is also available at: cpin-rcip.com/help
- ☐ Consider getting a fan. If cost is an issue, call 211 to see if there's a local agency that could help with the cost. (A list of programs that may offer help is also available at cpin-rcip.com/help). Keep the fan in an easily accessible place in

your home.

- ☐ Buy, make, or get window coverings to block sunlight and keep your home cooler during extreme heat. A low-cost option is covering windows with cardboard or blankets.
- ☐ Get an indoor thermometer (available at hardware stores).
- ☐ Get a flashlight and keep it in an easily accessible place in your home.
- ☐ Get an oral or ear thermometer.
- ☐ Arrange to get some light, loose-fitting clothing at a store or thrift shop.
- ☐ Get a spray bottle so that you can mist water onto yourself when it's very hot.
- ☐ Get a water bottle that you can take with you if you have to go outdoors.

Drinking water

- ☐ Make sure you are always well stocked with bottled water.

Be prepared for power outages

- ☐ Have a plan for potential power outages. Follow the tips at getprepared.ca
- ☐ Keep extra water on hand in case you need it during a power outage.
- ☐ Consider getting a portable power bank or solar recharger for your cell phone.
- ☐ Make arrangements so that you can visit a Check-in Companion or other place with AC to cool off if your home

becomes too hot – See "Where I Can Go to Cool Off" and "Where I Can Spend the Night If My Home Becomes Too Hot" in your Heat Safety Plan.

Monitor the weather

- ☐ Download the WeatherCAN App at canada.ca/weathercan or bookmark Environment Canada's weather alert updates at weather.gc.ca

Learn more about how to protect yourself at www.cpin-rcip.com/heat

My Personal Heat Safety Plan

My Personal Heat Safety Plan KEY Information

(keep this plan handy so you can find it easily when needed)

MY SUPPORT NETWORK:

My Check-in Companions: *include name(s) and phone number(s)*

Driver/Local transportation: _____

OTHER IMPORTANT NUMBERS:

OHIP: _____ – _____ – _____ Version Code: _____

My pharmacy: _____

My primary care provider/clinic: _____

My local public health agency (EOHU/OPH): _____

My municipality: _____

For a 24-hour helpline that can connect you to local supports and services, **dial 211**.
If you are experiencing an emergency, please **call 911**.

If you don't know where you can go to cool down during an extreme heat event, call **211**. 211 is a 24-hour helpline that can connect you to local social services, programs and community supports.

What to Do When a HEAT WARNING Alert Is Issued

GET READY:

- **Reach out to your Check-in Companions group.** Make plans to stay in touch daily during the heat wave, and arrange for someone (your check-in companion, personal service worker, or someone else) to visit you regularly in case you need help.
- Monitor the weather on your WeatherCAN app or online at weather.gc.ca/
- Renew your meds, get groceries, and get personal and pet supplies, if needed.
- Make sure you're well stocked with bottled water.
- Make sure any supplies you might need (fan, flashlight, batteries, indoor and body thermometers, etc.) are close at hand.
- Consider closing your blinds or curtains ahead of the heat wave, to block sunlight and help prevent your home from heating up as quickly. A low-cost option is covering your windows with cardboard or blankets.
- Be prepared to leave your home to go to a cooler space if it gets too hot: See "*Where I Can Go to Cool Off*" and "*Where I Can Spend the Night If My Home Becomes Too Hot*" in the **Key Information** section of this Heat Safety Plan.
- To learn more about how to keep children safe, see [***Keep children cool! Protect your child from extreme heat***](#) from Health Canada, at canada.ca/heat (in the "Related Resources" section).

What to Do DURING THE HEAT EVENT

PROTECT YOURSELF:

- **Call your Check-in Companion(s) at _____ AM/PM to stay in touch and check on each other during the heat event.**
- Monitor the weather on your WeatherCAN app or online at weather.gc.ca/
- If you have an air conditioner, turn it on.
- Avoid spending time outdoors from 10 AM to 4 PM. If you do go out, wear light clothing and a hat, bring a water bottle, and take frequent sips.
- Close your blinds or curtains during the day or block your windows with cardboard or blankets.
- If there's a power outage, follow your emergency plan (see tips at getprepared.ca).
- Be prepared to leave your home if it becomes too hot.

IF YOUR HOME IS WARM/HOT:

- Use fans to keep air moving and to help you feel cooler (only if the room temperature is below 35°C or 95°F).
- Avoid using your oven. Use the microwave to heat things or make food that does not require cooking (like sandwiches, cold soups etc.).
- Turn off non-essential devices that generate heat.

- Take off extra layers of clothing to expose as much skin as possible so that it can cool down more easily.
- Limit caffeine/alcohol to avoid dehydration.
- Spend time in an air-conditioned space for at least 1-2 hrs a day: See "*Where I Can Go to Cool Off*" in the **Key Information** section of this Heat Safety Plan.
- Fill a spray bottle with cool water and spray it on your face and neck – it will help you cool down as the water evaporates off your skin.
- Keep wet towels in a plastic bag in the fridge and place them on your neck, chest or back when hot.
- Spend time in cool water (take cool showers/baths, sit with your feet in cool water, or visit a pool).
- Make sure you're drinking enough water. Drink often and before you feel thirsty to replace fluids. When you are dehydrated, it is hard on the heart. Certain chronic conditions can start to get worse, or heat exhaustion can set in.
- If you're passing urine that is darker than usual or haven't peed for many hours, you may be dehydrated. Drink more water.
- Open your windows if the temperature outside is cooler than inside, if it is safe to do so, and if there is no air quality warning (see airqualityontario.com/aqhi for air quality warnings).
- Sleep in a cool room, if possible.

- **Monitor your indoor temperature:** Aim to keep your indoor temperature no higher than 26°C (78.8°F). If your indoor temperature remains higher than 26°C, you may need to leave your home to get to a cooler space. See "*Where I Can Go to Cool Off*" and "*Where I Can Spend the Night If My Home Becomes Too Hot*" in the Key Information section of this Heat Safety Plan.

- **Monitor your body temperature:** Take your temperature daily during heat wave and if you start feeling hot, take it more often. If your temperature is greater than 37.2°C (99°F) and doesn't respond to cooling: Go to a cooler or air-conditioned space to cool down. See "*Where I Can Go to Cool Off*" and "*Where I Can Spend the Night If My Home Becomes Too Hot*" in the Key Information section of this Heat Safety Plan.

- **If your resting body temperature rises above 39°C (102.2°F), you are in the DANGER ZONE - Call 911.**

DANGER ZONE:

If your home becomes very hot, take the measures discussed above to cool yourself down and be ready to leave your home to go to a cooler space if needed.

Becoming overheated can quickly become dangerous. Be on the lookout for the following symptoms:

HEAT EXHAUSTION: Weakness, headache, nausea/vomiting/diarrhea, thirst, dark urine, intense fatigue. If you experience any of these symptoms during extreme heat, immediately move to a cool place and drink liquids. **If symptoms are not relieved by drinking water, resting and cooling: Call 911.**

HEAT STROKE: Red and hot skin, dizziness, nausea, confusion, loss of coordination or a change in consciousness. **Heat stroke is a medical emergency!** If you or someone else is experiencing these symptoms: **Call 911.**

If your resting body temperature rises above 39°C (102.2°F) you require immediate emergency attention: **Call 911.**