

Staying well in hot weather

Summer heatwaves and hot weather can affect anyone. But if you have a long-term Lung or Heart condition, you're more at risk of the heat affecting you.

Looking after your lungs in hot weather:

Living with a lung condition in high temperatures can bring problems with breathing and flare ups. In a heat wave, strong sun light can affect the ozone layer, causing it to rise. This can cause breathing problems, irritate your nose and throat resulting in coughing and wheezing and can trigger symptoms if you have asthma or COPD. Extreme heat can increase perspiration, cause you to overheat and dehydrate. This can make you feel more breathless and your lung condition feel worse. If High temperatures or a heatwave is forecast, plan ahead and avoid going out during the hottest hours of the day, usually between 11am-3pm. Make sure you have enough medication and follow your self-management plan from your health provider so you know what to do if you feel unwell.

Top Tips

- Check the weather, pollen and pollution forecasts
- Avoid the heat
- Keep out of the sun
- Pack a bag of essentials
- Exercise sensibly
- Drink cold water
- Keep your house cool
- Take cool baths or showers
- Use a fan
- Eat as normal
- Look out for yourself and others

Visit the BLF for more helpful guidance by clicking on the link below

<https://www.blf.org.uk/support-for-you/hot-weather#:~:text=Summer%20heatwaves%20and%20hot%20weather,hot%2C%20making%20you%20feel%20worse.>

Looking after your heart in hot weather

Warm weather puts stress on everyone's heart by causing it to beat faster and work harder to keep the body cool. People with heart disease or heart conditions do not adapt easily, putting them at risk for heat stroke.

Sweating is the body's natural response to overheating. It removes not only water but also necessary minerals from the body, causing added stress on the heart. Heat is also lost through radiating heat through the blood flowing in your veins and arteries. On a hot day, your cardiovascular system ramps up its efforts to radiate heat to cool you down. Your heart beats faster and pumps harder, and may circulate two to four times as much blood each minute as it does on a cool day.

Additionally, some medicines people take for heart disease remove fluid from the body. This category includes diuretics and beta blockers. Some other common heart medication such as ACE inhibitors and calcium channel blockers change the way the body responds to the heat.

As a result, this can lead to a drop in blood pressure but is usually not a problem as well as you drink enough fluids to prevent dehydration. People with heart conditions should continue taking their medications as prescribed and be aware you may need to drink more water to keep your body in balance. Individuals on fluid restriction should follow guidance from their health provider.

Top Tips

- Slow down on hot, humid days. Reduce your exercise pace. Do not exercise in extreme hot or humid weather.
- Avoid the sun in the hottest part of the day
- Keep hydrated
- Wear heat appropriate clothing
- Avoid drinking too much caffeine or alcohol as they increase fluid loss.
- Eat foods with a higher water content such as fruit and salad.
- Keep your house cool
- Apply sunscreen and wear a hat when going outside and carry water with you.

Visit the British Heart Foundation and Pumping Marvellous for more helpful information by clicking on the links below

<https://pumpingmarvellous.org/managing-heart-failure-in-the-heat/>

<https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/support/practical-support/weather-and-your-heart>