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STAY COOL AND PRACTICE HEAT SAFETY AS TEMPERATURES RISE

Drink water to stay hydrated and watch for heat-related illness warning signs

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Ocala, Fla.—With temperatures expected to rise steeply this week, the Florida Department of Health in Marion County reminds residents and visitors about the risks of heat and how to prevent heat-related illness. The hot and humid weather of a Florida summer can place extra stress on the body, especially while outdoors, so it is critical to practice safe habits that protect against heat-related illness.

“Staying hydrated is crucial in the heat, and water is the best way to hydrate,” said Florida Department of Health in Marion County Health Officer Erin Hess. “Watch out for yourself, especially if you’re working outside. And watch out for each other. Check on neighbors, friends and family to help older adults and people with special needs stay safe in the heat.”

Heat stress can range from mild to severe. Milder conditions, like heat rash and heat exhaustion, are the most common; while the most serious heat-related illness is heat stroke. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if medical treatment is not provided.

The most vulnerable to heat-related illness are the elderly, people with a chronic medical condition, those who work or exercise outdoors and infants and children, but anyone subjected to high temperatures for an extended period of time can overheat.

Remember to never leave children or pets unattended in vehicles, not even for a minute. Temperatures in vehicles heat up quickly, especially during the summer, and can become deadly in a matter of minutes.

Know the warning signs of heat-related illness:

- Extremely high body temperature (above 103°F)
- Weakness, dizziness or fainting
- Unusually elevated heart rate
- Fast and shallow breathing
- Nausea or vomiting
- Muscle cramps

Protect yourself with these helpful tips:

- Stay hydrated with water; avoid sugary and alcoholic beverages
- Wear lightweight and light-colored clothing
- Stay in air-conditioned buildings
- Limit outdoor activity, especially in the afternoon during the hottest part of the day
- Take cool showers or baths
- Check your local news for heat warnings and safety tips

Remember to stay cool, hydrated and informed this summer. For more information on extreme heat and heat-related illness prevention, visit emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat.

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