

## U and Universal

### Heat Related Illness

As we enter the month of July, it is important to be aware of the dangers of heat related illnesses. Individuals with developmental disabilities are at a higher risk for heat related illness for a number of factors.

Recognizing heat-related illness:

#### 1. Heat exhaustion

This occurs when the body is having difficulty cooling itself. Symptoms include:

- Nausea
- Profuse sweating
- Dizziness
- Headache

#### 2. Heat Stroke

This is a much more serious condition and occurs because of the body's failure to control or maintain appropriate temperature. Symptoms include:

- Vomiting
- Confusion
- Rapid pulse
- Seizure

Responding to heat-related illness:

Remove the person from the heat and begin cooling measures. Use wet towels and place the person in front of a fan. You can also rehydrate the person with water every 15 minutes. If the person refuses any water, has vomiting, or any loss of consciousness call 911 immediately.

Tips to avoid heat-related illnesses:

- Drink water (pay attention to people who cannot communicate thirst)
- Avoid outside strenuous activity
- Rest often in the shade
- Dress for the heat (cool, light weight clothes and a hat)

This information can be found at WebMD and DHHS

## Did You Know?

An estimated 1.7 million people in the United States depend on wheelchairs to assist with mobility. Many of our staff provide services to people who depend on wheelchairs. Here are tips to remember:

- Always ask the person if they would like assistance before jumping in to help
- Don't lean in to talk to the person, remember, this is a part of their personal space
  - If your conversation lasts more than a few minutes, consider sitting down to get yourself on the same eye-level
  - If the person transfers from a wheelchair to somewhere else, do not move the wheelchair out of reach
- Remember that the wheelchair is a means of freedom to the person

- Check routinely to assure that the wheelchair is in good working order and is comfortable to the person using it
  - As always, the key concept is to focus on the person, not their disability!
- For more information on mobility: [www.wheelchairnet.org](http://www.wheelchairnet.org)

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