

## August is 'Beat the Heat' Awareness Month

With record breaking temperatures and consequently, the hottest summer the Pacific Northwest has ever seen, Washington Imaging Services would like to remind you of some simple strategies to avoid the harmful effects of high temperatures.

Heat-related illnesses include heat stroke, heat cramps and heat exhaustion. Heat stroke is considered the most serious and requires immediate medical attention.

Heat stroke occurs when your core body temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails and your body is unable to cool down. It is most common in infants, the elderly, outdoor workers who are physically exerting themselves in the heat, and people who are unable to leave their homes.



**Heat stroke can occur without warning, and exhibits the following symptoms: Hot, red, dry skin, rapid pulse, rapid shallow breathing, headache, confusion, untypical behavior, possible loss of consciousness, extremely high core temperature of up to 106 degrees F.**

Victims of heat stroke require urgent medical attention -- call 9-1-1 immediately. Provide the victim with shade or a cool area indoors, remove the victim's clothing, apply cool water to their skin and fan them vigorously to promote sweating and evaporation.

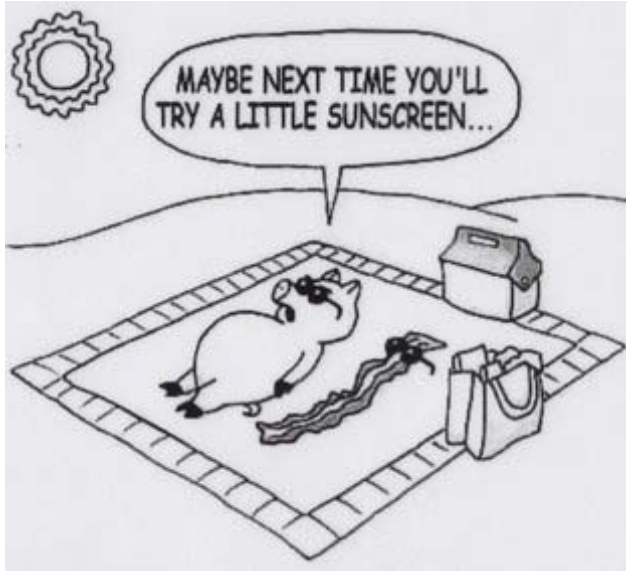
Strategies to stay cool to avoid heat stroke:

- Drink plenty of fluids
- Avoid drinks that can lead to dehydration, such as alcohol and coffee,
- Keep your home cool by closing blinds and curtains
- Stay indoors with air conditioning or a fan
- Avoid strenuous activity during the hottest time of day (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.)
- Wear lightweight, light-colored and loose fitting clothing, and a wide-brimmed hat when in the sun.

Remember to **never** leave children or pets in a parked car. Temperatures can rise to 125 degrees F within 20 minutes in an enclosed vehicle when the outside temperature is 93 degrees F. Leaving car windows slightly open or "cracked" will *not* keep the inside of the vehicle at a safe temperature.

Check regularly on older people, and those who are unable to leave their homes, for signs of heat-related illness.

Avoiding excessive sun exposure can prevent heat stroke and help avoid sun damage and burns.



Always keep children under the age of one out of the sun. Be aware that water, snow, sand and concrete can reflect up to 85 per cent of the sun's dangerous rays. UVA rays can also penetrate glass (like the windshield of a car).

Remember to protect yourself even in cloudy or overcast weather since the sun's rays can penetrate through clouds.

Seek and create shade: Seek shade as often as possible from trees, buildings, and canopies, etc, keep playpens, strollers and carriages in shaded areas.

Cover up: 80 percent of skin cancers occur above the neck. Cover children's head, neck and ears with a broad brimmed hat when outdoors, wear clothing that covers as much of the body as possible that is loose fitting and does not let light through.

- UVA/UVB protective sunglasses can help prevent damage to your eyes by blocking a large amount of UV rays -- children should wear them too.
- Use sunscreen: Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen that protects against both UVA and UVB rays with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30. Apply sunscreen generously before all outdoor physical activities such as swimming, skateboarding, biking or even walking.
- Remember to apply at least 20 minutes before sun exposure. Reapply often, as perspiration will reduce effectiveness.