

# Healthy LIVING while aging!



EXTENSION  
College of Agriculture,  
Biotechnology & Natural Resources



June 2020

Healthy Aging Newsletter provided by UNR Extension

## HEAT ILLNESSES

by Dr. Anne Lindsay

Summer heat in Nevada can be a ruthless and even deadly problem for many older adults who don't realize when they are in danger from overheating.

When we are heated, deep body fluids with raised temperatures travel through the blood stream to the surface of the skin for cooling. Blood circulation is critical to this process. One reason that older adults are susceptible to heat-related illnesses is poor circulation, which obstructs this cooling. Individuals with poor circulation tend to feel cold in cooler spaces and reach for a sweater which further limits the bodies cooling ability. Older adults also don't sweat as effectively. Sweating is an important mechanism that allows cooling as the damp skin dries. On days when humidity is higher, dampness may prevent the surface of the skin from drying and therefore doesn't cool the body.

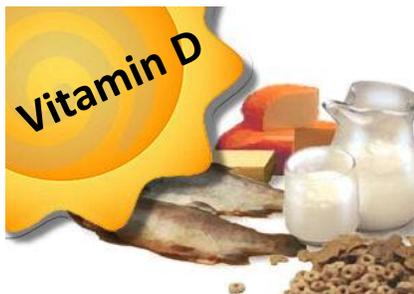
Individuals at greatest risk for heat stress include people over 65 years of age and those that are overweight, have heart disease, dementia, diabetes or other chronic medical conditions. Certain medications are also affected by extreme heat, including diuretics and others prescribed for hypertension and Parkinson's disease. Heat stress can result in major illnesses from mild to severe or life threatening.

- Heat rash - the mildest condition; a skin rash caused by excessive sweating during hot, humid weather that looks like a red cluster of pimples or small blisters particularly in the neck, upper chest, groin area, under the breasts, and elbow creases.
- Heat cramps - a loss of salt and moisture in the body, especially in the muscles such as those of the abdomen, arms or legs occur in individuals who sweat a lot during strenuous activity. In addition to standard care for heat illnesses, individuals on a low salt diet or have heart problems should seek medical attention.
- Heat syncope - fainting or dizziness episodes that can occur after a sudden rising from prolonged sitting or lying during high temperatures
- Heat exhaustion - pale skin, extreme weakness, dizziness, shallow breathing, confusion and nausea usually through excessive sweating resulting in extreme loss of water and salt
- Heat stroke - the most serious heat-related disorder; can lead to death or disability without medical attention and occurs when the body's temperature rises rapidly (up to 106 degrees within 10-15 minutes), the sweating mechanism fails, and the body is unable to cool down.

For more information about Healthy Aging education or resources,  
please contact Dakota at 702-948-5916 or visit our website:  
[extension.unr.edu](http://extension.unr.edu) and search "Healthy Aging".

June is here! When you're chicken lays a fried egg, your seatbelt feels like a branding iron and your thermostat reads "Are you kidding me?" it's time to take extra precautions and stay cool! Remember, it's easier to prevent than it is to treat!! Follow these A-B-C-D-E's:

- A** – Air-conditioned buildings are your friend! Spend at least some of your day in a cool air-conditioned space like a mall or theater.
- B** – Breaks should be taken in cool, shady areas regularly while outdoors.
- C** – Clothing should be lightweight, light-colored, loose fitting and breathable (cotton not synthetic). Wear hats that are loosely woven and don't trap heat. They should also be broad-brimmed to cover the entire face.
- D** – Drink fluid frequently. If you are properly hydrated, you should never feel thirsty (e.g. one cup every 15-20 minutes). Avoid alcohol, iced coffee, soda and other highly caffeinated drinks as they are dehydrating. Enjoy frozen treats with a high water and low sugar content, like sugar-free popsicles (make your own using a juice and water mix) and eat fruit with a high-water content, like watermelon.
- E** – Exposure to the sun or extreme heat should be minimal or completely avoided. Take a cool shower or bath or sponge bath.



You do not need to rely on sunshine alone to get adequate amounts of vitamin D. Eating certain foods can help increase levels of vitamin D, too, according to Dr. Factora with Cleveland Clinic. Foods with high amounts of vitamin D include:

- Eggs
- Fatty fish like salmon or tuna
- Fortified milk and orange juice
- Mushrooms

## Summer Fruit Salad

### Ingredients

- 1 cup strawberries (diced, fresh or frozen)
- 1 cup watermelon (cubed)
- 1 cup pineapple chunks, fresh or canned packed in natural juice (and do not drain)

### Directions

1. Stir fruit together in a medium sized bowl.
2. Cover and chill. Serve as soon as possible.

Recipe from: <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/recipes>

## Tips for Gardening in the Heat

⇒ **Garden in the morning**

⇒ **Wear a big hat**

⇒ **Put on sunscreen**

⇒ **Keep hydrated**

⇒ **Tie a wet cloth around your neck**



Tips from Old Farmer's Almanac Website:

[www.almanac.com/news/gardening-news/heat](http://www.almanac.com/news/gardening-news/heat)

This Newsletter is funded, in part, by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), an EEO/AA Institution.

