Health Department Urges Caution During High Heat

The Santa Barbara County Public Health Department is urging caution and common sense for the unusually high temperatures predicted in the county in the next few days.

“"The elderly are more vulnerable to temperature extremes and we need to be vigilant on their behalf whenever possible," said Dr. Takashi Wada, Public Health Department Director and County Health Officer. "Please check in regularly with elderly friends, family members, and neighbors, especially when an excessive heat warning is in effect."

Residents are strongly urged to take appropriate precautions whenever temperatures rise, especially:

- Take care of those who might not be aware of the danger or be able to react accordingly –especially the elderly, young children, and pets.
- Drink plenty of cool, non-alcoholic beverages regardless of your activity level, especially those without sugar or caffeine. Don’t wait until you’re thirsty to drink. If you have fluid restrictions from your doctor, ask to see how much you should drink while the weather is hot.
- Take regular breaks in the shade or in an air-conditioned room. If your home doesn’t have air conditioning, go to a shopping mall or library – even a few hours in air conditioning can help your body stay cooler. You can also take a cool shower or bath.
- Know the signs of heat exhaustion. If someone becomes dizzy, nauseated, or sweats heavily, find a cooler location for him or her immediately.
- Know the signs of heat stroke. Heat stroke is much more serious than heat exhaustion. The symptoms are similar to heat exhaustion, but also include hot, flushed skin. With heat stroke the person often stops sweating and the skin will be unusually dry. If heat stroke is a possibility, call 911 immediately. Heat stroke is life threatening!
- Be aware of the dangers of leaving children (and pets) unattended in vehicles. It only takes a matter of minutes on a relatively mild day for a vehicle to reach deadly temperatures, a fact that is exacerbated the hotter it is.

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