

Tips to staying cool in extreme heat

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Extreme heat can be dangerous, but you can stay cool and safe this summer if you take the right precautions.

The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) offers some tips for doing so.

"No matter your age, it is critical to be able to recognize the signs of heat-related illness," said [Dr. Jocelyn Ross Wittstein](#), an [orthopedic surgeon](#) at Duke Health in North Carolina and an AAOS spokesperson.

"When we exercise, our bodies cool off by sweating. We become dehydrated if we do not replace the fluids that we lose through perspiration," she said in an AAOS news release. "Dehydration makes it difficult to sweat and cool down and can result in a heat injury ranging from mild cramps to a more life-threatening heat stroke."

It's important to stay cool and hydrated. About 70% to 90% of the energy that a person's body produces during [regular exercise](#) is released by heat, according to the AAOS.

Environment, clothing and dehydration can hinder heat release and perspiration.

Wittstein suggests consulting with your doctor before starting a new exercise activity if you have a [health condition](#), like heart or [lung disease](#), or take medication that could cause dehydration.

Then, increase the intensity and duration of your exercise program gradually. Avoid wearing [protective equipment](#) at the start of training.

Get and stay hydrated before, during and after exercise, even if you don't feel thirsty.

It's important to drink about 24 ounces of non-caffeinated fluid two hours before exercise. Drinking an additional 8 ounces of water or sports drink right before exercise is also helpful, according to the AAOS.

Break for 8 ounces of water every 20 minutes during exercise.

It can also help to wear lightweight and light-colored clothing. Wear sunscreen to protect against skin exposure.

Finally, routinely monitor the weather, including temperature and humidity, the experts advised.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more tips for preventing [heat-related illness](#).

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