



<b>DATE:</b>	<b>June 20, 2025</b>
<b>TO:</b>	Health Alert Network
<b>FROM:</b>	Debra L. Bogen, MD, FAAP, Secretary of Health
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>Extreme Heat Forecasted for Pennsylvania – Practice Heat Safety</b>
<b>DISTRIBUTION:</b>	Statewide
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Statewide
<b>STREET ADDRESS:</b>	n/a
<b>COUNTY:</b>	n/a
<b>MUNICIPALITY:</b>	n/a
<b>ZIP CODE:</b>	n/a

**This transmission is a “Health Advisory” which provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.**

**HOSPITALS:** PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL MEDICAL, PEDIATRIC, INFECTION CONTROL, NURSING AND LABORATORY STAFF IN YOUR HOSPITAL

**EMS COUNCILS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE

**FQHCs:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE

**LOCAL HEALTH JURISDICTIONS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE AS APPROPRIATE

**PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR MEMBERSHIP

**Summary:**

- Extreme heat is forecasted for Pennsylvania starting Sunday, June 22 and continuing into early next week.
- Exposure to extreme heat can cause multiple medical issues including heat exhaustion and heat stroke.
- Extreme heat may increase visits and calls to doctor’s offices, visits to emergency departments and urgent care centers, and hospitalizations.
- There are multiple resources provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to educate providers, patients, and the public on the health risks of extreme heat and ways to mitigate those risks.
- The National Weather Service (NWS) [HeatRisk](#) website shows the Pennsylvania HeatRisk is forecast as major (red) and extreme (magenta) next week. HeatRisk uses categories to provide recommendations for outdoor and indoor activity for the general population and sensitive populations (including infants and children, pregnant women, adults over age 65, people with disabilities, mental health conditions, chronic health conditions, substance use disorders, and people who are unhoused, lack access to cooling, are socially isolated, breathe polluted air, or work or engage in other strenuous activities outside).
- If you have any questions, please call DOH at 877-PA-HEALTH (877-724-3528) or your local health department.

## Background

Beginning Sunday June 22, 2025, extreme heat, with temperatures above 90°F and heat index values near or above 100°F, is expected across Pennsylvania. The NWS and CDC HeatRisk is in the major (red) and extreme (magenta) categories for most of Pennsylvania on and after June 22, with most areas at least in the major (red) risk category for multiple days. It is also expected to be very humid, which will make it more difficult for the body to cool itself and thus make the heat more dangerous.

At this time, preliminary forecasts show that at least five consecutive days of extreme heat are possible. Exposure to extreme heat can cause multiple medical issues, especially heat exhaustion and heat stroke, and increase health care facility visits for heat-related illness. Medical providers in Pennsylvania should be aware of this event and ask patients about their exposures to extreme heat during medical visits from at least June 22 to June 26. This will be the hottest weather of 2025 so far. More extreme heat events are likely during the summer.

## Heat risks

Exposure to extreme heat poses many risks for people and animals. Extreme heat and humidity can make the body unable to cool itself quickly enough, potentially leading to organ system failures and death. Providers should be aware of the following medical issues that result from exposure to extreme heat:

**Rhabdomyolysis (rhabdo)** – Caused by prolonged physical exertion, often associated with heat stress. Rhabdo is the rapid breakdown and death of muscle which releases electrolytes and proteins into the bloodstream. Signs to look for include:

- Muscle cramps and pain
- Abnormally dark urine
- Weakness
- Exercise intolerance
- If left uncontrolled, rhabdo can result in irregular heart rhythms, seizures, and damage to kidneys.

**Heat Exhaustion** – Caused by increased stress on various parts of the body, including inadequate blood circulation due to cardiovascular insufficiency or dehydration. Signs to look for include:

- Pale, cool, moist skin
- Heavy sweating
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Headache
- Increased thirst
- Fainting (heat collapse)

**Heat Stroke** – This is the most serious of all temperature-related disorders or conditions and its occurrence is difficult to predict. When heat stroke occurs, temperature regulation fails and body temperature rises to critical levels. Signs to look for include:

- Red, hot, unusually dry skin
- Lack of or reduced perspiration (sweating)
- Nausea
- Dizziness and confusion
- Irrational behavior
- Abnormally high body temperature
- Convulsions

- In extreme situations, coma

## Recommendations

For the general public:

- Consult with a health care provider if you might be ill from heat exposure or contact 911 if experiencing a medical emergency.
- Stay indoors in air conditioning and out of the sun if possible.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Check on friends, family, neighbors, and pets.
- Cancel or postpone outdoor activities if possible.
- Research heat-related resources available in the community; call 211 for assistance finding community resources that may be available.
- If you must work outdoors, go early or late in the day, wear light, loose-fitting clothing, take frequent breaks, and use a buddy system.

For health care providers:

- Be aware and ask about exposure to extreme heat during medical visits:
- Have a low threshold to evaluate all suspected heat-related illness:
- Direct patients to educational resources which provide instructions on how to avoid heat-related illness: and
- Review medication regimens with patients with consideration to their risks related to heat; adjustments to medication doses, frequency, and fluid restrictions may be made.

## Additional resources

- [NWS and CDC HeatRisk Tool](#)
- [CDC Heat Guidance For Health Care Professionals](#)
- [CDC About Heat and Your Health](#)
- [Ready PA Extreme Heat](#)
- [PA DOH Heat-Related Illness](#)
- [PA DOH Extreme Heat Preparedness](#)
- [PA DOH Extreme Heat StoryMap](#)

If you have additional questions about this guidance, please contact DOH at 1-877-PA-HEALTH (1-877-724-3258) or your local health department.

Individuals interested in receiving PA-HANs are encouraged to register at [HAN Notification Registration \(mir3.com\)](#)

Categories of Health Alert messages:

**Health Alert:** conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

**Health Advisory:** provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

**Health Update:** provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

This information is current as of June 20, 2025, but may be modified in the future.
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