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**Tips for Seniors:  
Stay Cool During Hot, Humid Weather**

The Executive Office of Elder Affairs advises elders to enjoy the summer weather but take careful precautions during extremely hot weather. High temperatures can take a toll on health. Seniors especially should take extra care to keep cool and hydrated during hot, humid days. Here are a few tips for enjoying the summer weather while keeping comfortable and safe:

**Keeping Cool**

**A. Clothes**

- a. Wear light colors and light materials such as linen and cotton. Materials such as rayon and polyester tend to trap heat close to the skin.
- b. Wear loose fitting clothing;
- c. Wear a hat with a wide brim to protect the face;

**B. Home**

- a. Stay indoors during extremely hot weather;
- b. Lower shades, blinds, or close drapes on the east side of your home during the morning hours and the west side during the afternoon in order to keep your home or apartment as cool as possible. Use a fan in the rooms where the windows are covered;
- c. If you do not have air conditioning in your home, go to your local Council on Aging/senior center, Aging Service Access Point, mall, movie theater or library in order to stay cool.

**C. Outdoors**

- a. Wear sunscreen SPF (Sun Protection Factor) of 30 or higher;
- b. Wear a wide-brimmed hat or take an umbrella to block the sun;
- c. Schedule outdoor activities before 10am or after 6pm when the temperature is lower;

- d. Avoid strenuous activity;
- e. If you are outside, take frequent breaks in shaded area;
- f. Avoid crowded places.
- g. If possible, go to a place where you can get relief from heat, such as air conditioned libraries, theaters, and other community facilities that may offer refuge during the warmest times of the day.

## **Keeping Hydrated**

### **A. Fluids**

- a. The best liquid to drink during hot, humid days is water. Drink plenty of water, even if you are not thirsty, in order to stay hydrated;
- b. Avoid drinks with caffeine;
- c. Avoid alcoholic beverages which will dehydrate your body;
- d. Drink sports drinks that have the added minerals that your body loses when it sweats.

### **B. Food**

- a. Keep frozen treats such as ice cream and popsicles in the freezer that can help you keep cool during hot weather;
- b. Eat cold foods such as sandwiches and salads;
- c. Fresh fruits and vegetables are also another way to keep hydrated.

## **Keeping Safe**

### **A. Buddy System**

- a. Make sure that you have someone to check on you to make sure that you are well.

### **B. Using Common Sense**

- a. Avoid long walks, particularly during noon-3pm, when the sun is at its peak;
- b. Slow down, avoid strenuous activity. Do not try to do too much on a hot day;
- c. Pay attention to weather reports;
- d. Contact your doctor if you are taking several drugs for a number of health problems because these may make it harder for your body to keep cool through perspiration. A few examples would be diuretics, sedatives, tranquilizers, and also some heart and blood pressure medicines.

For further tips on staying cool please visit the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency's website at: [www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema)