Be aware and ready for the heat

With summer’s high temperatures approaching Sydneysiders are encouraged to be sun-smart and aware of the dangers caused by excessive heat.

Heat waves or long periods of extreme heat can have serious impacts on people’s health.

Health experts are calling on the community to plan ahead and be prepared for extreme heat by following the simple steps below.

- **Drink plenty of water:** Carry a bottle with you everywhere you go and drink on a schedule. For example, drink water when you wake up; at breakfast, lunch and dinner; and when you go to bed. Or drink a small glass of water at the top of each hour.
- **Keep your body cool:** Plan your day around the heat – avoid being outdoors between 11am and 3pm. If you do go outside remember to wear a hat and sunglasses, and apply SPF30+ sunscreen 20 minutes before you go outside, and re-apply every two hours. Wear light coloured, loose fitting clothes made from natural fibres like cotton.
- **Keep your house cool:** Cool your house by closing windows, shutting curtains and blinds, opening windows at night if you can to let in cool air. Know which room in your house is the coolest (this will often be on the ground floor on the south side). Use air-conditioning if you have it. If not, spend time in a cool place like a library, shopping centre or cinema.
- **Take care of others:** Visit or telephone elderly friends, neighbours and relatives, at least once a day, check they have water in the fridge and encourage them to drink. Take particular care to keep children cool and get them to drink lots. Never leave babies, children or animals alone in a car even if the air-conditioner is on.
- **Have a plan:** Know who to call if you need help. Follow your doctor’s advice if you have any medical conditions. If you feel unwell, seek medical advice from your doctor or nearest hospital. Keep an eye on the weather forecast.

You are also encouraged to look out for the following symptoms of heat stroke and seek urgent medical assistance by calling 000 for an ambulance:

- A sudden rise in body temperature
- Red, hot and dry skin (sweating has stopped)
- Dry swollen tongue
- Rapid pulse, rapid shallow breathing
- Intense thirst
- Headache, dizziness, nausea or vomiting
- Confusion, poor coordination or slurred speech
- Aggressive or bizarre behaviour
- Loss of consciousness
- Seizures or coma.

For more information or to speak with an expert health clinician please contact Caline Haddad from the Sydney Local Health District at sydneymedia@sswhs.nsw.gov.au or (02) 9515 9607.