



Hot Weather and Psychiatric Medications: Be Aware. Take Care.

Arizona's summers are more than hot. The extreme heat can be *very dangerous* for people taking *psychiatric medications*.

Most psychiatric medications decrease your body's natural responses to heat

- Psychiatric medications can increase your risk of heat stroke, which can be deadly.
- Such medicines can make your body unable to control its own temperature and can restrict your body from sweating.
- Even a short time in hot weather could cause a rapid and uncontrollable rise in body temperature.

Drugs of major concern

- Medicines used to treat schizophrenia and bipolar disorder (antipsychotic medicines)
- Antidepressants
- "Antiparkinson" medicines, like benztropine
- Migraine medicines (triptans, in particular)

The first weeks on a new medication or after a change in dose are very dangerous times for heat illness.

To stay healthy and well, take your medications as directed and practice heat safety.

Heat illness or overheating can happen while working, playing, resting, or doing routine activities.

Symptoms can range from discomfort to death. Muscle cramping may be the first warning sign. Other symptoms include confusion/dizziness, fainting, headache, nausea/vomiting, seizures, and coma.

Learn how to stay safe in extreme heat!

- ***It is extremely important to take your medications as prescribed by your doctor. (Regardless of weather!)***
- If you have been exposed to the heat and develop any symptoms of heat illness, get help immediately.
- Tell your family or friends that you are sensitive to heat. They can watch for signs of heat illness and get you to an emergency department quickly.
- Don't use alcohol or street drugs! They can increase heat illness and make you unaware that your temperature is rising.
- Limit outdoor activities to the early morning, when outside temperatures are coolest.
- Find a cool place to spend the hottest times of the day. (Take shelter, don't swelter!)
- Avoid overexertion during extreme heat.
- Seek shade during hot weather.
- Stay hydrated. On hot days, drink water before you feel thirsty.
- Heat can decrease your appetite; try to eat throughout the day.
- Talk to your health care provider or pharmacist about your medications and heat illness.



For more information, visit:

www.cdc.gov/extremeheat