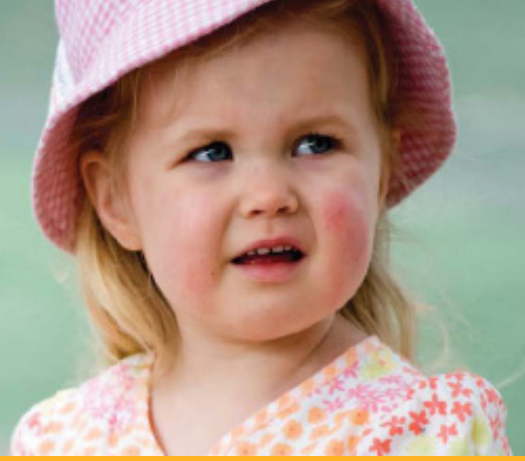


KEEPING CHILDREN COOL THIS SUMMER



Young children are particularly vulnerable during heatwaves — their bodies are still learning how to deal with extreme heat. Children under five years do not have as many sweat glands as adults do and their core temperature can rise rapidly during dehydration.

Basic safety measures

- Try to stay indoors during the hottest part of the day.
- If you have to be outdoors, keep in the shade as much as possible.
- Dress your child appropriately for the heat — choose light and loose-fitting clothes.
- Try to keep your child calm and avoid activities that involve physical exertion.
- A small amount of water in a shaded children's pool is often sufficient to keep kids occupied, happy and cool. However, be careful of direct exposure to the sun and never leave a child unattended near water.
- Educate children to be sunsmart and Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek, Slide — Slip on a shirt, slop on sunscreen, slap on a hat, seek shade and slide on wrap around sunglasses when outside.
- Give your child small, light meals at shorter intervals — small, water-based icy poles are a good way to keep your children hydrated.

Travelling in a car

If travelling in the heat by car:

- Dress your child in loose-fitting, light clothing.
- Consider having your car windows tinted and use window shades.
- Provide air flow with air conditioning.
- Give your child frequent small drinks of cool (not cold) water.
- Avoid setting the airconditioner's temperature too low. Getting out of an ice-cold car into a heatwave can cause shock and heat stress.
- Never, under any circumstances, leave a child of any age inside a car alone.

Heat rash

The most common heat problem experienced by small children is heat rash. Heat rash is usually caused by children that are overdressed in the hot weather. The rash consists of red or pink dots that can appear anywhere on the body, although mostly on the head, neck or shoulders.

Heat rash often heals by itself, but medical attention should be sought if the rash persists for more than three days. The best treatment for heat rash is to cool the child down. Remove or loosen clothing to allow the skin to dry. A cool bath and cold wet washcloths can also be effective.



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