Health Matters

Part 2

Beat the Heat!

You are more at risk for Heat Stress if you:

(✓) Check all that apply

☐ Have heart or kidney failure
☐ Have high blood pressure
☐ Have diabetes
☐ Take “water pills”
☐ Are overweight or underweight
☐ Have had a stroke
☐ Have an infection or fever
☐ Have vomiting or diarrhea
☐ Drink alcohol or caffeine
☐ Have no air conditioning

Talk to your doctor about your medications and medical conditions to see if you are at a higher risk for Heat Stress.

Prevent Heat Stress INDOORS by:

• Staying in cool areas. (If you do not have an air conditioner, consider a visit to a senior center, shopping mall, or public library for a few hours.)
• Using a fan, but only when there is cooler air blowing.
• Taking a cool shower or bath. It is an effective way to cool off.
• Using your stove/oven less to maintain a cooler temperature in your home.
• Avoiding hot foods and heavy meals. They add heat to your body.
• Keeping insulated curtains, drapes, or blinds closed during daylight hours.
• Having a friend, relative or neighbor check on you twice a day during heat waves.

Prevent Heat Stress OUTDOORS by:

• Drinking plenty of water. Avoid alcohol or caffeine (they are dehydrating).
• Wearing lightweight, light-colored, loose clothing (cotton blends are best).
• Wearing a wide-brimmed hat, or using an umbrella for shade.
• Using a sun block with SPF 15 or higher. Sunburn affects your body’s ability to cool itself and causes loss of fluids.
• Pacing yourself. Take frequent rest periods in the shade or a cool area.
• Limiting your physical activity.
• Limiting your time outdoors in the heat. Go out early morning or late afternoon.

Health Matters is produced monthly by the PrimeTime Health Promotion and Nutrition Unit staff of Philadelphia Corporation for Aging • 642 N. Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19130-3409 • (215) 765-9000 • Visit PCA online at: http://www.pcaphl.org

PrimeTime Health: Promoting the health of older Pennsylvanians