



Weekly Alert June 20th, 2024

Texas heat wave part of rising trend in U.S. heat deaths

4 in 10 Texas adults surveyed heard that heat deaths are up

From 2021 to 2023, heat-related deaths in the U.S. **increased by 44%**. Almost half of Texas adults surveyed (44%) heard about the increase in the last week. Of 541 adults surveyed in five states, those ages 50 and older were more likely than those under 50 (39% vs. 24%) to hear that heat-related deaths are increasing, as were men compared to women (36% vs. 25%).

Extreme heat can kill... here's how

Heat stroke occurs when your body overheats. It is the **primary cause** of heat-related death. Understanding how this happens shows why prevention is so important. In high heat, your body:

- **Can't regulate temperature.** Normally, sweating and blood flow to the skin help keep you cool. In extreme heat, your body struggles to keep up, leading to dangerously high body temperature.
- **Becomes dehydrated.** High temperatures lead to more sweating. If fluids lost by sweating are not replaced, you become dehydrated and can't sweat enough to cool off. Your body overheats.
- **Can experience organ damage.** Being overheated and dehydrated changes blood flow to vital organs, causing swelling and potential failure. The brain, heart, gut and kidneys are most at risk.
- **Can go into shock.** "Shock" is your body's response to a sudden drop in blood pressure. It further restricts blood flow and oxygen circulation and can ultimately lead to death.

Preventing heat stroke (and signs of trouble)

Stay hydrated; avoid sun during high heat (especially during the hottest times of day); wear loose clothing; and stay in air-conditioned spaces when possible. If you or someone with you experiences dizziness, muscle cramps, nausea, or profuse sweating, seek medical attention immediately.

Protect these 3 groups first

People with existing conditions like heart disease are at greater risk of heat stroke because their bodies often cannot handle the additional stress of high temperatures. Adults over 75 also struggle to stay cool because their sweat glands may be less responsive. Infants (< 1 year) are at increased risk because their body's thermoregulation system is still developing.

Spread the word to prevent heat-related deaths in Texas

Please share the resources below. Texas residents can dial 2-1-1, check local news stations or visit [here](#) for a map of cooling center locations.

This week's report is based on responses from a panel of 541 adult residents of Texas (n = 52), St. Louis, MO (n = 146), Baltimore, MD (n = 169), Omaha, NE (n = 85), and Colorado (n = 88) surveyed June 15–17, 2024. Explore these data and more at [iHeard Texas](#).

Shareable Resources

Click to download resources to share in your community. Remember to include **#iHeardTexas #iHeardTX** when sharing on social media!

The Importance of Heat Awareness

Extreme heat
iHeard Texas

What makes heat dangerous?

Extreme heat makes the body work harder to keep cool. It can...

1. Overwhelm the body's natural cooling system. Sweating and increasing blood flow to the skin isn't enough to stay cool, so body temperature rises.

2. Cause dehydration. Sweating cools us down, but if fluids aren't replaced we get dehydrated. We can no longer sweat enough to cool down.



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3. Cause organ damage. Overheating and dehydration cause swelling and change blood flow to vital organs like the brain, heart and kidneys. It can lead to breathing problems and organ failure.

4. Make existing health conditions worse. Hot weather impacts air quality, causing asthma attacks and worsening COPD symptoms. Heat can increase the risk of heart attacks and strokes too.



Protect these three groups first

iHeard Texas

Anyone can get heat stroke, but these groups are at greater risk.

Who?	Why?
People with existing conditions like heart disease	Their bodies often cannot handle the additional stress of high temperatures
Adults over 75	Their sweat glands may be less responsive
Infants (< 1 year)	Their body's thermoregulation system is still developing



Sources: [Mayo Clinic](#), [Weather.gov](#)

Suggested Caption:

Remember, extreme heat can be dangerous. Stay hydrated, seek shade, and take care of yourself. Spread the word about the importance of staying cool and safe!

#iHeardTexas #HeatSafety #StayCool

[Download here](#)

Heat Stroke, what's the big deal?



Suggested Caption:

With summer heat in full swing, it's important to remember to check in with yourself and others about how they're feeling in the heat. Practice these tips to stay safe and healthy!

#iHeardTexas #HeatSafety #StayCool

[Download here](#)

DANGER! Heat can HARM!



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Extreme heat and humid air make asthma worse, even for young athletes like Sara. Breathing in hot air causes airways to narrow and tighten, making it hard to breathe.

Source: Allergy Asthma Network

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Keep Sara and the people you care about safe in high heat.

- **Hydrate:** Water helps thin mucus in the lungs and airways. It also helps cool your body. 💧
- **Limit time in the heat:** Stay inside or take frequent rest breaks in the shade. ☀️
- **Be prepared:** Keep your inhaler or asthma meds nearby to control symptoms. 🏠

Suggested Caption:

Did you know that extreme heat and high humidity can worsen symptoms for those with conditions like asthma? Reach out to your healthcare provider if you experience any worsening symptoms.

#iHeardTexas #HeatAndHealth #StayCool #AsthmaAwareness

[Download here](#)

BEWARE! Heat is here!

Extreme heat
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Luis, a beloved abuelo, sat outside his house on a hot Texas day. He hadn't had a sip of water for hours, and started to feel sick.

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Luis felt dizzy and weak. His body struggled to cool down as temperatures soared above 90°F.

In hot weather, the body cools itself mainly by sweating. The evaporation of sweat regulates your body temperature. But in hot, humid weather, the body is less able to cool itself efficiently.

Source: Mayo Clinic

Heat-related illness can happen fast
iHeard Texas

Heavy sweating, muscle cramps, nausea and headache are signs of heat sickness.

Heavy sweating Nausea Headache

If your core body temperature reaches 104 F (40 C), it can lead to heat stroke. Red, hot and dry skin, confusion, loss of consciousness are signs of heat stroke.

Source: Mayo Clinic

Check on neighbors and loved ones
iHeard Texas

Make sure they...

- **Stay hydrated:** Drink plenty of water often. 💧
- **Cool down:** Use fans, AC, or visit cooling centers. ❄️
- **Avoid peak heat:** Stay indoors during the hottest parts of the day. 🏠

Suggested caption:

☐☐ Don't let the heat take a toll on your health! ✨☐ Heat exhaustion and heat stroke are serious risks during summer. Spread awareness about heat-related illnesses and help keep everyone safe!

#iHeardTexas #HeatAndHealth #StayCool #HeatStrokeAwareness

[Download here](#)

HOT HOT Resources... Read all about them!



Let's keep everyone safe and healthy during hot weather. Share these local resources with people in your life so we can all stay cool and protected from the heat ✨.

#iHeardTexas #HeatSafety #StayCool

[Download here](#)

Combined Resource

Click to download a printer-friendly PDF with all the information above!

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Find more information on what public health topics are trending this week.

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Explore past alert topics and shareable print and digital graphics.

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