

Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Some Like it HOT!

Weather is hot – sweat is dripping, mouth is dry and the sun is blazing – these are the Dog Days of Summer. The “Dog Days” is the name for the sultriest period of summer, which lasts from about **July 3 to Aug. 11**; and from all indications, we are smack in the middle of them. The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency wants to remind residents that during this traditional hot summer period to be sure to use caution to avoid heat related illnesses. We offer the following tips:

- Be sure to drink plenty of fluids, regardless of your activity level. If your doctor has limited the amount of fluid you drink or has you on water pills check with him/her to find out how much fluid you should drink during hot weather.
- Don't drink liquids that contain alcohol or large amounts of sugar. These types of beverages cause you to lose more body fluid.
- Stay indoors and stay in an air-conditioned place. If your home does not have air conditioning, go to the shopping mall or public library. Even a few hours spent in air conditioning can help your body stay cooler when you go back into the heat.
- Take a cool shower or bath is another way to cool down your body temperature.
- Electric fans may provide comfort, but when the temperature is in the high 90s, fans will not prevent heat-related illness.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- NEVER leave a person or a pet in a closed, parked vehicle.

According to Jo Ann Wilczynski, Prevention Services Director, “Anyone can suffer from heat-related illness during this hot weather, but infants, children, seniors and those with chronic diseases or mental illnesses are more susceptible. If you know someone who falls in

these age groups or has these types of conditions, be sure to check on them often during this hot weather spurt.”

Signs of heat exhaustion include:

- Heavy sweating
- Paleness
- Muscle cramps
- Tiredness
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fainting

If you must be out in the heat of the day, be sure to:

- Limit your outdoor activity to morning and evening hours when temperatures are cooler.
- Cut down on exercise. But if you must exercise, drink two to four glasses of cool, nonalcoholic fluids each hour. A sports beverage can replace the salt and minerals you lose in sweat.
- Rest often in shady areas.
- Protect yourself from the sun by wearing a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses and sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher with UVA/UVB protection).

To get you through the dog days, the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency has posted a **Hot Weather Health Emergencies Frequently Asked Questions** flyer on its website to help you identify symptoms for heat exhaustion and other heat related illnesses. Check it out by going to www.bhsj.org and clicking on Frequently Asked Questions.

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