

STAY COOL DURING THE HEATWAVE AND STAY INFORMED

We all eagerly look forward to outdoor activities during warmer weather. To increase your enjoyment of the summer season and prevent heat-related illness Franklin County Office on Aging (FCOA) urges older adults to be cautious as the temperatures rise.

When the body is not cooling off from sweat evaporation, the core temperature rises, more sweat is produced to fight higher temperatures and dehydration sets in, creating a vicious cycle that leads to more severe heat-related illness. Medications taken by older adults may affect their ability to sweat and greater complicate the problem.

Everyone is urged to frequently check on older relatives, friends and neighbors to make certain they are cool and comfortable.”

Additional tips

- Drink plenty of water and juices and avoid alcohol. A physically inactive adult in a moderate climate should drink 48-80 ounces of water a day. Four cups of water can be obtained daily from fruits, vegetables, meats, bread and cheese. One cup of water comes from body metabolism or breakdown of energy nutrients.
- Avoid vigorous activity from noon to 4:00 p.m. Outdoor activities, such as gardening and mowing should be reserved for cooler morning or evening hours.
- Place a thoroughly chilled wash cloth at the base of your neck or place both hands in a bowl of iced water.
- Use fans and air conditioners liberally. Older adults who live in homes without fans and air conditioners are at increased risk.
- Run exhaust fans when you shower or cook to vent warm air.
- Place lamps and televisions away from your thermostat.
- Use a microwave instead of a conventional oven.
- Keep sunny windows covered with blinds or draperies.
- Install light-colored window shades to reflect heat away from your house.
- Take advantage of local cooling centers established for your comfort.

Warm weather can impact energy usage and costs too. This is unwelcome news for many older adults living on a fixed income. ***However, your concerns about energy costs shouldn't affect your ability to be comfortable and safe this summer.*** Here are some tips for keeping energy costs as low as possible while trying to beat the heat.

- Have a professional inspect and tune-up your central air system to help save on operating costs and extend the life of the system. Also, have your ducts tested to have any leaks sealed.
- Keep air conditioners clean. Air conditioner filters should be cleaned or replaced once a month during the cooling season. Remove any objects blocking the path of air flowing from

your air conditioner. Also, clean warm-air registers and make sure they're not blocked by furniture, carpeting or drapes.

- Set your thermostat at 78 degrees when you are at home and 85 degrees or off when you are away. Consider using a programmable thermostat to automatically raise the temperature when you are away and decrease it just before you arrive. Using ceiling or room fans allows you to set the thermostat higher because the air movement will cool the room.
- Make sure your home has the appropriate amount of insulation in walls, attics and crawl spaces. Insulation is just as important in the summer since it helps keep warm air outside.
- Run exhaust fans when you shower or cook to vent warm air.
- Place lamps and televisions away from your thermostat.
- Hang laundry outside to dry. (A few minutes on your clothes dryer's "fluff" cycle will soften any stiffness.)
- Use a microwave instead of a conventional oven, but if you must use them, avoid running heat-producing appliances (ovens, clothes dryers) during the hottest times of day.
- Keep sunny windows covered with blinds or draperies.
- Install light-colored window shades to reflect heat away from your house.

The Franklin County Office on Aging has a limited supply of fans for seniors over the age of 60. Contact Franklin County Senior Options at 614-525-6200 to discuss eligibility requirements, as well as additional summer cooling resources and cooling center locations.