



AMR News For Immediate Release

Contact: Mark Bruning 719-597-1277 or
Tawnya Silloway 719-597-1277, ext. 142
tawnya.silloway@amr.net

HEAT SAFETY AMR Offers Heat Safety Tips for the Public

Colorado Springs, CO, May 24, 2006 - The hot sun has begun to show its strength as it beats down on our city this week. American Medical Response (AMR) is dedicated to preventing heat-related injuries. Following are some heat safety tips to help you prepare when the weather gets hot.

Never leave a child or elderly person unattended in a motor vehicle, even with a window slightly open. This applies to pets as well. On a typically sunny day, the temperature inside a vehicle can reach potentially deadly levels within a few minutes.

When restraining children in a car that has been parked in the heat, check to make sure seating surfaces and equipment (car seats and seat belt buckles) are not overly hot.

What are the warning signs of a heat stroke? An extremely high body temperature (above 103°F); red, hot and dry skin (no sweating); rapid, strong pulse; throbbing headache; dizziness; nausea; confusion; and unconsciousness.

Who is at greatest risk for heat-related illness? Infants; children up to four-years-old and adults age 65 and older; people who are overweight; people who are ill; or people on certain medications.

What to do if you see someone with the warning signs of a heat stroke: Call for immediate medical assistance; move the victim to a shady area; cool the victim rapidly, using whatever methods you can – immerse the person in a cool shower or bath, spray with cool water from garden hose, sponge the person with cool water, or if the humidity is low, wrap the victim in a wet sheet and fan him/her vigorously; monitor body temperature and continue cooling efforts until the body temperature drops to 101-102°F; do not give the victim alcohol to drink.

During hot weather you need to drink more liquid than your thirst indicates. Avoid drinks containing alcohol or caffeine because they will actually cause you to lose more fluid.

Heat Safety Tips

What is the best clothing for hot weather or a heat wave? Wear as little clothing as possible while at home. Choose lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing. When going outdoors, apply sunscreen 30 minutes prior, and continue to reapply. Sunburn affects your body's ability to cool itself and causes a loss of body fluids.

Can medications increase the risk of heat-related illness? Yes. The risk may increase for those using: psychotropics (e.g. haloperidol or chlorpromazine), medications for Parkinson's disease because they can inhibit perspiration, and tranquilizers (e.g. phenothiazines, butyrophenones and thiozanthenes.)

How can people protect their health when temperatures are extremely high? Remember to keep cool and use common sense. Drink plenty of fluid, replace salts and minerals, wear appropriate clothing and sunscreen, pace yourself, stay cool indoors, schedule outdoor activities carefully, use a buddy system to monitor those at risk and adjust to the environment.

Sources: National Safe Kids Campaign and the National Center for Environmental Health.

American Medical Response Inc., (www.amr.net) America's leading provider of medical transportation, is locally operated in 35 states. More than 18,000 AMR paramedics, EMTs and other professionals transport nearly four million patients nationwide each year in emergency, critical and non-emergency situations. Operating a fleet of approximately 4,400 vehicles, AMR is headquartered in Greenwood Village, CO.

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