

Summer Safety: Week 6 – Exercise in the Heat – Safely...

The Science

If it is hot outside, your internal body temperature is even higher. Your muscles regulate heat by releasing sweat in order to cool your body down. It's important to keep in mind that as your body sweats, you are losing body fluids that your body needs to function properly. If you don't rehydrate and continue to lose fluids, you become in danger of suffering heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Heat exhaustion and heat stroke happen when the body can no longer sustain the pace, the heat, the humidity or the loss of fluid. This results in your body's core temperature rising and puts the internal organs and central nervous system at risk. Dehydration must be taken very seriously as it can lead to death in extreme cases.

Top 5 Ways to Stay Safe in the Sun

1. **Exercise before 10am or after 4pm.** The sun is hottest between 10am and 4pm so plan your workout outside of those hours, especially when it is supposed to be a scorcher!
2. **Stay hydrated!** You need to drink at LEAST 8-10 glasses of water per day and more if you are outside. Ensure you are drinking every 15-20 minutes while outdoors.
3. **Wear light, breathable clothing made of wicking fabric.** Using light colours will reflect the sun so avoid dark colours.
4. **Slow down!** If the weather is hot, modify the speed and/or intensity of your workout accordingly. Don't expect to keep the same pace as you did the day before when it was cooler.
5. **Acclimate yourself!** Expose yourself regularly to the warmer temperatures if you intend on working out outdoors regularly throughout the summer. It can take up to 14 days to adjust to temperature changes.



You can stay cool while working out by wearing broad-rimmed hats or tying a wet bandana around your neck. Why not try switching your workout to a water-based one, like swimming? If all else fails and it's simply too hot outside, there is no shame in moving your workout indoors. No air conditioning at home? Try walking around your local shopping mall at a brisk pace.

Most importantly, the best way to keep yourself safe in the summer weather is to use **common sense!!** If it's hot enough to fry an egg on the sidewalk, perhaps it's not the best time to give rock climbing or your first marathon a try?

If your skin is reddening, you are fatigued or dizzy – get out of the sun! Go indoors, drink lots of water and give your body a rest.

Remember that dehydration is your body's way of telling you that it does not have enough fluid to function properly.

Enjoy your time outdoors, be active but stay safe!



Sources: www.webmd.com, www.active.com