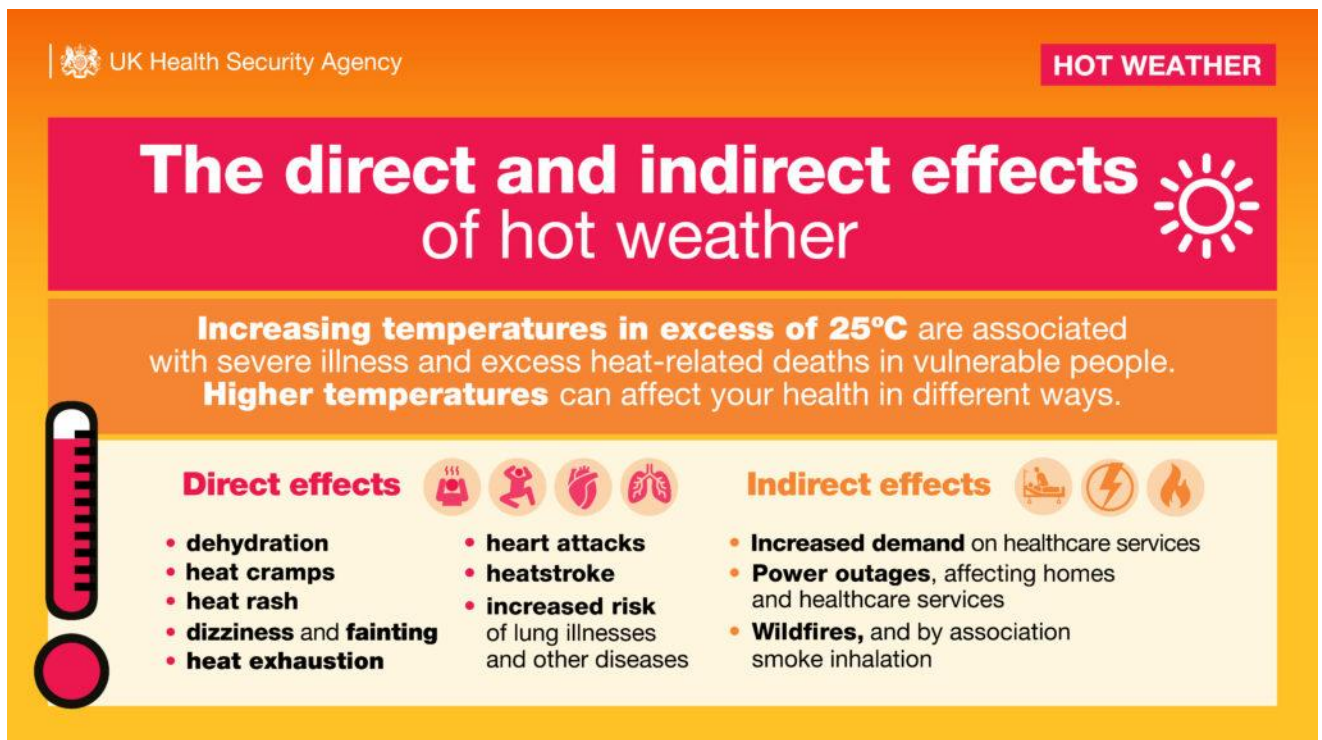


## Yellow Heat Health Alert

### Targeted information for people in insecure housing or experiencing homelessness

A **Yellow Heat-Health Alert** has been announced which means that hotter weather over the coming days could increase risks to your health.

Hot weather can cause dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. It also increases the risk of heart attacks, strokes and breathing problems. Hot weather can make mental health symptoms worse, and negatively influence behaviour. Some medications can make dehydration worse, or limit the body's ability to adapt to heat. Spending a long time in the sun can increase the risk of sunburn and skin cancers. In some cases these problems can be fatal.



UK Health Security Agency

**HOT WEATHER**

## The direct and indirect effects of hot weather

Increasing temperatures in excess of 25°C are associated with severe illness and excess heat-related deaths in vulnerable people. Higher temperatures can affect your health in different ways.

**Direct effects**

- dehydration
- heat cramps
- heat rash
- dizziness and fainting
- heat exhaustion

**Indirect effects**

- heart attacks
- heatstroke
- increased risk of lung illnesses and other diseases
- Increased demand on healthcare services
- Power outages, affecting homes and healthcare services
- Wildfires, and by association smoke inhalation

We know it can be difficult to stay safe and comfortable during periods of hot weather when you don't have a place to call home. This information is designed to highlight actions and resources to help you to stay cool, comfortable and safe during a **Yellow Alert** – everyone's circumstances are different, so choose the actions that are best for you.



## **Cool places:**

It's best to avoid direct sun especially during the hottest hours of the day (11-3pm) if possible. Here's some places you might find shelter and shade:

### **Outside**

- Shady, greener locations where there is good air movement like parks will often be cooler than urban areas with lots of concrete and tarmac.
- Outdoor water sources can be a tempting way to cool off, however they can also be very dangerous - it's safer to avoid entering open water.

### **Inside**

- Support services, day centres, public spaces and council maintained facilities like libraries may have "cool spaces" open where you can find shelter and shade
- If you have access to temporary accommodation consider:
  - Turn off lights and electrical equipment when not in use
  - During the day - close windows, curtains, blinds or shutters in rooms that face the sun
  - During the night/early morning (where safe to do so) - open windows to increase flow of cooler air
  - Ask about designated "cool spaces" (areas kept below 26°C) and spend time in these if other areas cannot be kept cool
- If the actions above haven't worked, you could think about:
  - Using a fan if available whilst the temperature is below 35°C (avoid aiming directly at the body which can lead to dehydration)
  - Use air conditioning if available - this is a useful cooling aid but it also has downsides - use as a last resort when other actions insufficient



## **Cool People:**

Here's some actions you can think about taking to keep yourself cool and safe - if you need advice, support or resources to be able to take these actions, speak to your local support service who may be able to help

- avoid direct sun exposure where possible - particularly at the hottest time of the day (11am to 3pm) - using the tips above
- avoid strenuous physical activities during the hottest times of the day (11-3pm) if possible
- wear long, loose, light-coloured clothing

- wear wide-brimmed hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen (SPF 30, 4/5stars UVA protection, reapplied regularly) if sun exposure can't be avoided
- stay hydrated - drink cool water regularly through the day, and if available, ice lollies or water-rich foods can also help. You can refill bottles in several locations around the city, check here to find your nearest spot (<https://www.refill.org.uk/refill-bradford-district/>)
- alcohol, caffeine and recreational drugs can make dehydration worse - it's safer to avoid or reduce use when temperatures are high
- some medications need to be kept at a specific temperatures - check their labels and speak to a your local support service to see if they can help store them
- some people may have extra risk factors during hot weather
  - those with long-term health conditions - heart or breathing conditions, dementia, diabetes, kidney disease, Parkinson's disease, mental ill-health, mobility issues
  - those who take medications that may change the body's response to heat or fluid balance - this included some medications for heart, kidney or mental health problems
  - those who are unwell e.g. experiencing an episode of diarrhoea and vomiting
  - those with alcohol or drug dependence
  - those who may be fasting
- if these apply to you, or someone you look out for, please take extra care and seek help early if you don't feel well – **call NHS 111 for advice or 999 for an ambulance in an emergency**



### **Recognising signs of overheating:**

- tiredness
- weakness
- dizziness
- headache
- feeling sick or being sick
- excessive sweating
- skin becoming pale, clammy or development of a heat rash - these changes can be less apparent on brown and black skin
- cramps in the arms, legs, and stomach
- fast breathing or heartbeat
- a high temperature
- being very thirsty

- confusion
- irritability



### How to cool down:

- **move somewhere cooler** e.g. a room with fans, air conditioning or somewhere in the shade
- **remove unnecessary clothing** e.g. a jacket or socks
- **re-hydrate** e.g. drink cool water, a sports or rehydration drink, or eat cold and water rich foods like ice-lollies
- **apply cool water** by spray or sponge to exposed skin, place hands in cool water, or use cold packs/items from a freezer wrapped in a cloth under the armpits or on the neck.

**If you're worried, not feeling better or starting to feel worse at any time, seek help and assistance without delay – call NHS 111 for advice or 999 for an ambulance in an emergency**

You can find more information including translations, easy read and British Sign Language resources here:

[Beat the heat: hot weather advice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/beat-the-heat-hot-weather-advice)

[Heat exhaustion and heatstroke - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/heat-exhaustion/)

[Sunscreen and sun safety - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/sun-safety/)

[Homeless England | Homeless Link - find your local support services or alert and outreach team](#)