

Heat Wave

Heat Wave conditions can result in physiological strain, which could even result in death. Orissa experienced severe heat wave conditions during April to mid June in 1998, and nearly 2,000 people died of heat stroke.

To minimise the impact during the heat wave and to prevent serious ailment or death because of heat stroke, you can take the following measures:

- Avoid going out in the sun, especially between 12.00 noon and 3.00 p.m.
- Drink sufficient water and as often as possible, even if not thirsty
- Wear lightweight, light-coloured, loose, and porous cotton clothes. Use protective goggles, umbrella/hat, shoes or chappals while going out in sun.
- Avoid strenuous activities when the outside temperature is high. Avoid working outside between 12 noon and 3 p.m.
- While travelling, carry water with you.
- Avoid alcohol, tea, coffee and carbonated soft drinks, which dehydrates the body.
- Avoid high-protein food.
- If you work outside, use a hat or an umbrella and also use a damp cloth on your head, neck, face and limbs
- Do not leave children or pets in parked vehicles
- If you feel faint or ill, see a doctor immediately.
- Use ORS, homemade drinks like lassi, torani (rice water), lemon water, buttermilk, etc. which helps to re-hydrate the body.
- Keep animals in shade and give them plenty of water to drink.
- Keep your home cool, use curtains, shutters or sunshade and open windows at night.
- Use fans, damp clothing and take bath in cold water frequently.

TIPS FOR TREATMENT OF A PERSON AFFECTED BY A SUNSTROKE:

- Lay the person in a cool place, under a shade. Wipe her/him with a wet cloth/wash the body frequently. Pour normal temperature water on the head. The main thing is to bring down the body temperature.
- Give the person ORS to drink or lemon sarbat/torani or whatever is useful to re-hydrate the body.
- Take the person immediately to the nearest health centre. The patient needs immediate hospitalisation, as heat strokes could be fatal.

Acclimatisation

People at risk are those who have come from a cooler climate to a hot climate. You may have such a person(s) visiting your family during the heat wave season. They should not move about in open field for a period of one week till the body is acclimatized to heat and should drink plenty of water. Acclimatization is achieved by gradual exposure to the hot

environment during heat wave.

