



# 5 Steps to Ready

## Extreme Heat

Heat waves are among the most dangerous disasters. Protect yourself and your family with these easy steps.

### 1. Make a plan

- Know where you'll go to cool down if you don't have air conditioning or the power goes out. Cooling centers, libraries, public pools, shopping malls or movie theaters could be options.
- Use our **Tips for People with Specific Conditions or Risk Factors** to identify people in your family and community at higher risk during extreme heat. Plan to check on them regularly.
- Power outages during heat waves can be dangerous, especially for people who need air conditioning or medical equipment that uses electricity.
  - If you have a generator, know how to use it safely.
  - A smaller battery backup can help run medical equipment or fan but will not be able to power air conditioning for very long.

### 2. Prepare your essentials

- Water:**
  - Carry more water than you think you'll need when you go outside.
  - Reusable water bottles that keep drinks cold are a great way to keep water cool.
- Cooling Supplies:**
  - Have fans in the house, including battery-powered fans for power outages.
  - Keep spray bottles on hand to wet your skin in front of a fan.
  - Soak your feet in cold water.
  - Keep frozen water bottles or wet t-shirts in the freezer to use as ice packs.



If it's hotter than 95°F, fans might not help. You'll need to put water on your skin first. Use wet towels, misters or take a cold shower, and then use a fan to cool off.

### 3. Consider your medications

- Keep at least seven days of medication on hand.
  - Ask your pharmacist about extra medicine if needed.
  - If your medicine needs to stay cold, ask what to do if the power goes out.
  - Some health conditions or medicines can make it harder to stay cool. Ask your pharmacist or provider what you should do.

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### 4. Prepare to stay cool

- Check that your air conditioner, fan or evaporative cooler is working. Replace filters or pads if needed.
- Wear loose, light-colored clothing. Wet cloths can help cool your body too.
- If you are outside, wear sunscreen or UPF-rated clothing so you don't get sunburned.
- Avoid exercising or staying outside too long during the hottest part of the day from 11a.m. to 5p.m.
- If you must be outside, drink plenty of water, take breaks in shade or cool areas and move slowly and pace yourself.
- Drink water and electrolytes if you are sweating a lot. Avoid caffeine, sugary drinks and alcohol.

### 5. Stay informed

- Check out our [\*\*Heat Action Plan and Tip Sheet\*\*](#) and learn the signs of severe heat illness. Signs can include being hot to the touch, agitated, confused or passing out.
- Call 911 right away if someone with you has these symptoms and work to get them cool.
- Sign up for local emergency alerts on your phone.
- Keep an eye on people who are at higher risk from heat (young children, older adults or people with health problems).
- Download the FEMA app for emergency alerts and the NOAA Weather Radio app.

Learn more at [ready.gov](https://ready.gov) and [americares.org/ClimateClinics](https://americares.org/ClimateClinics)