



## WILL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT & COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

# For Immediate Release

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**News media calls to Vic Reato: Media Services Manager at (815)727-5088.**

Agency Website: [www.willcountyhealth.org](http://www.willcountyhealth.org)

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## HEALTH DEPARTMENT OFFERS HEAT EMERGENCY TIPS

**JOLIET** – Central Will County’s heat index exceeded 100 degrees July 14-15, and the National Weather Center believes temperatures could possibly reach triple digits during one or more of the next several days.

Extreme heat and humidity can pose health risks for everyone, but the Will County Health Department urges area residents to remember that infants, the elderly and the chronically ill are especially susceptible when dangerously hot weather persists. Try to visit family members, friends and neighbors who face special heat-related health risks at least twice a day. Of course, infants and young children typically require more frequent attention.

The Health Department offers these common sense tips to help everyone cope with a potentially dangerous heat emergency:

1. Drink lots of water and natural juices; avoid alcoholic beverages, coffee, colas and drinks with large amounts of sugar. Caffeine and alcohol place added burdens on the circulatory system when heat and humidity are dangerously high.
2. Limit exercise. If you must exercise during the hottest hours (typically 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.), drink two to four glasses of cool, nonalcoholic fluids each hour. A sports beverage can replace the salt and minerals you lose through sweat.
3. If you must be outdoors during the hottest part of the day, wear a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses and sunscreen. Choose a sunscreen product with an SPF rating of 15 or higher.
4. Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing and avoid heavy meals. Cotton clothing is best. Several small, light meals are preferable to binge eating or drinking. Avoid the use of cooking ovens and other appliances that generate excessive heat.
5. Do not allow anyone to sit in a hot car, even for a few minutes. Temperatures inside a stationary vehicle without air-conditioning can reach extremely dangerous levels in minutes.

If you are indoors without air-conditioning, keep shades drawn and blinds closed. Windows may be open slightly to take advantage of any breeze.

The effects of extreme heat conditions on the human body are cumulative and can lead to a variety of health complications, including heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Even a few hours spent in air conditioning can help your body cope with dangerously high heat index values.

Electric fans may provide comfort, but they will not prevent heat-related illness when temperatures approach triple digits. Frequent showers or baths can help relieve heat-related stress on the body.

For more information on heat-related illness and heat emergencies, visit [www.idph.state.il.us](http://www.idph.state.il.us).



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