

If you or others feel unwell

If you feel dizzy, weak or have an intense thirst or headache you may be dehydrated. Drink some water and rest in a cool place. Seek help if symptoms persist.

If you are experiencing painful muscle cramps, your body may need electrolytes as well as fluid. Drinking oral rehydration solutions or zero sugar sports drinks may help. Seek medical advice if heat cramps last for more than one hour.

If you, or someone in your whānau, feels unwell, or needs advice, you can talk to your local GP, urgent care clinic, pharmacy or hauora provider.

Call Healthline on 0800 611 116 for free, expert health advice anytime.

Keep medicines below 25°C or in the refrigerator (read the storage instructions on the label).



For more information

Visit **info.health.nz/heat** for information on health effects from heat.

For free, expert health advice call **Healthline 0800 611 116**



Look after yourself in the heat

As temperatures rise, it's important we care for ourselves and each other in the heat.

Health New Zealand
Te Whatu Ora

This resource is available from healthed.govt.nz or the Authorised Provider at your local health district. HE3365 | Revised October 2026

Health New Zealand
Te Whatu Ora

You can do a few simple things to help stay cool and well

Extreme heat can cause illness and death, but effective planning and actions can reduce its effects on health.

Drink plenty of water

- Try to drink at least two litres of fluids a day. Water is the best form of fluid.
- Avoid hot, caffeinated, energy or alcoholic drinks.
- Eat nourishing cold foods with a high water content, such as salads and fruits.



Stay out of the sun

- Avoid going out in the heat.
- Find shade outside wherever possible and stay indoors when you can.
- Remember to be SunSmart (slip, slop, slap and wrap).
- Avoid extreme physical activity or exercise in the middle of the day.

Keep yourself cool

- Dress down – wear lightweight, light-coloured, loose-fitting clothing made from natural fibres, like cotton or linen.
- Take a cool shower or bath.
- Spray water or apply cool wet cloths or towels to your skin.

Look out for others

- Look out for very young children and older whānau and neighbours. Check on them often to make sure they are drinking and eating well, keeping cool and taking medicines properly.
- Never leave people or pets unattended in a parked car.

Keep your space cool

Ventilation

- Keep your house cool – open windows to allow breeze to come through or close up and turn on the air conditioning.
- Open windows in the evening or overnight, once the temperature drops.

Insulation

- Having good home insulation is one of the most important ways to keep your house healthy. Home insulation will help keep your home cooler in summer.
- Keep light coloured curtains or blinds closed on windows that face the sun during the day. Dark coloured curtains or blinds are best left open as they absorb heat.

Cooling your home

- Turn off unnecessary lights and electrical equipment – they create heat.
- Sleep in another room if it is cooler
- Use an electric fan or air conditioner set to cool. Clean heat pumps – vacuum the filters regularly.