5 Healthy Tips to Beat the Heat

BOSTON — August 4, 2015 — The summer heat and humidity are in full force. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports that extreme heat events, or heat waves, are a leading cause of extreme weather-related deaths in the United States and that older adults (65 years and older), infants, children, and people with chronic medical conditions are more prone to heat stress.

“The summer months can be tough for many folks, including the elderly, children and those who are sick, as they tend to suffer the most in the heat,” said Jane Williams, MD, MPH, Medical Director at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. “Our goal is to keep people safe and provide them with the tools they need to enjoy the summer months while keeping cool and staying healthy.”

Here is a list of tips to help you beat the summer heat:

- Stay indoors in cooler spaces on hot and humid days. Go to places with air conditioning if you do not have an air conditioner, such as senior centers, shopping malls, movie theaters, libraries or community cooling centers.
- Drink plenty of liquids to avoid dehydration. Avoid drinks that contain alcohol, caffeine, or lots of sugar. They can lead to more fluid loss.
- Discuss possible problems with your doctor. Taking multiple medications or taking drugs that cause reduced sweating, such as sedatives and tranquilizers, can also raise your risk of heat illnesses. Heart, lung and kidney diseases and age-related changes to the skin, such as poor blood circulation and inefficient sweat glands, also make people more vulnerable to high temperatures.
- Encourage individuals who may have a heat-related illness to go into a shady, air-conditioned spot or other cool place. Have them lie down. Advise the person to shower, bathe or sponge off with cool water if it is safe to do so.
- Seek emergency medical attention if you suspect heat stroke. Possible symptoms of heat stroke include headache, dizziness, confusion, extreme tiredness, and seizure. To test your knowledge, take our interactive heat stroke quiz.

For more information visit ahealthyme, Blue Cross’ complete guide for health and wellness.

About Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (www.bluecrossma.com) is a community-focused, tax-paying, not-for-profit health plan headquartered in Boston. We are the trusted health plan for more than 30,000 Massachusetts employers and are committed to working with others in a spirit of shared responsibility to make quality health care affordable. Consistent with our corporate promise to always put our 2.8 million members first, we are rated among the nation's best health plans for member satisfaction and quality. Connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn.

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