

## COVID-19

# KEEPING COOL DURING COVID-19

### Keeping cool during heat alerts

- We know that heat and poor air quality can impact our health. Now there is the added challenge of COVID-19, an infectious disease that can harm our lungs and has caused changes to the way we live.
- There are lots of ways we can stay cool and reduce the risk for COVID-19 but it will take extra planning and care.
- For more information about COVID-19 and the latest updates, go to [www.LambtonPublicHealth.ca](http://www.LambtonPublicHealth.ca).

### What's a heat warning?

- A heat warning is issued when two consecutive days are forecasted to have a daytime high temperature greater than or equal to 31°C and a nighttime temperature greater than or equal to 20°C or a humidex greater than 40.

### What's humidex?

- Humidex describes how hot, humid weather feels to the average person.
- This measurement is calculated using temperature and humidity readings.

### What about air quality?

- During hot and humid weather conditions, the air quality may become worse making it feel more difficult to breath.
- This is especially true for children, older adults, and those with cardiovascular or lung disease, such as asthma.

### Who's most at risk?

- Extreme heat and humidity is a potential danger to us all and can result in heat stroke, heat exhaustion and other heat-related illnesses.

- Factors such as dehydration, fever, infection, sunburn and alcohol abuse can increase a person's risk and health conditions such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular, and respiratory problems.
- Many people at greater risk for heat-related illness are also at greater risk for COVID-19.

Those at greatest risk include:

- Older adults (over the age of 65)
- Infants and young children
- People with chronic illness such as heart disease or asthma
- People with physical or mental disabilities
- People who work in the heat
- People who exercise in the heat
- People who have limited resources to protect themselves

### What symptoms should I look out for?

Heat-related illness can be a medical emergency. Immediately find a cool place and drink fluids, preferably water if you experience any of the following symptoms during extreme heat:

- dizziness or fainting
- nausea or vomiting
- headache
- rapid breathing and heartbeat
- extreme thirst
- decreased urination with unusually dark yellow urine

### How can I prevent Heat Illness?

- Drink plenty of cool liquids, especially water, before you feel thirsty.
- Bring enough water with you if you are leaving the house, you might be out for

longer than intended due to COVID-19 precautions.

- Pay close attention to how you feel while outside in the heat. Wearing a mask may also make you feel warmer and is only recommended when physical distancing is not possible.
- During the pandemic and heat alerts, check-in, by phone or video, with family, friends and neighbours, especially older adults who live on their own to make sure they are staying cool and hydrated and have what they need.
- Plan outdoor activities, run errands where you might need to wait outside for your turn to shop, and visit loved ones in long-term care or retirement homes during cooler parts of the day (before 11am or after 3pm).
- Close awnings and curtains to block out the sun.
- Avoid sun exposure. Wear sunglasses, a wide-brimmed hat, or use an umbrella.

- Wear loose-fitting, light-coloured clothing made of breathable fabric.
- Prepare meals that do not require cooking in the oven.
- Some places that are usually good for cooling down like pools, splash pads, and beaches, may be closed. Contact the locations before going to find out what is open and what COVID-19 precautions are in place.
- You could also find ways at home to stay cool like taking cool showers or baths or running through the sprinkler.
- Never leave people or pets in a parked vehicle.

### **Are there cooling centres in Lambton?**

- As Lambton County moves between stages of reopening Ontario, cooling centre locations will become available.
- If you or someone you know could benefit from a cooling centre, please call Lambton Public Health at 519-383-8331 or 1-800-667-1839 for open centres.