



# Summer 2007



## The Heat is on !

Continued



Heat disorders generally have to do with a reduction of the body's ability to shed heat. When heat gain exceeds the level the body can remove, or when the body cannot compensate for fluids and salt lost through perspiration, the temperature of the body's inner core begins to rise and heat-related illness may develop.

Ranging in severity, heat disorders share one common feature: the individual has overexposed or over-exercised for the person's age and physical condition. Sunburn, with its ultra-violet radiation burns, can significantly retard the skin's ability to shed excess heat. Studies indicate that, other things being equal, the severity of heat disorders tend to increase with age. Heat cramps in a 17-year-old may be heat exhaustion in someone 40, and heat stroke in a person over 60.

There are some things you can do to stay cool. **Slow down.** Strenuous activities should be reduced, eliminated, or rescheduled to the coolest time of the day. **Dress for summer.** Lightweight light-colored clothing reflects heat and sunlight, and helps your body maintain normal temperatures. **Put less fuel on**

**your inner fires.** Foods (like proteins) that increase metabolic heat production also increase water loss. Drink plenty of **water or other non-alcoholic fluids.** Your body needs water to keep cool. Drink plenty of fluids even if you don't feel thirsty.

**Avoid alcohol. Spend time in air-conditioning** Air conditioning in homes and other buildings markedly reduces danger from the heat. **Don't get too much sun.** Sunburn makes the job of heat dissipation much more difficult; use plenty of sunscreen.



## Don't forget the dogs!

It's important not to forget our furry friends during the summer heat. Dogs lack sweat glands and must rely on panting to cool themselves off if they must be outside. Dogs dehydrate very quickly in the summer sun, so be sure to refill a large water dish often throughout the day. Make sure plenty of shade is available or erect a shelter, even if your yard is well-shaded. A molded plastic pool is a cheap and efficient way to keep our best friend comfortable.

