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**For Immediate Release**

**Extreme Heat is Dangerous. Take Steps to Stay Safe!**

**Buncombe County, N.C.** – With temperatures nearing 90° Fahrenheit later this week, it is important to take action to protect against heat-related illnesses, which can be very serious and even fatal, especially for the elderly, young children and those who have chronic diseases. Heat-related illnesses happen when your body cannot cool itself quickly enough. Some heat illnesses are mild - like heat rash, sunburn, and heat cramps. Others - like heat exhaustion, dehydration, and heat stroke - can be severe or even life-threatening. These simple steps can help protect against scorching heat:

 **Clear the Car:**

* Never leave anyone, especially children, pets, or those with special needs in a parked car, even briefly. Temperatures in the car can become life threatening within a few minutes.
* One trick for parents is to leave their phone or purse near their baby’s car seat.
* If you see an unattended infant or young child in a car even if the windows are cracked, call law enforcement.

**Stay Cool:**

* Use air conditioning in your home or go to an air-conditioned building such as a store, public library, restaurant, friend or relatives home. An electric fan can help cool you down until temperatures reach the mid-90s or higher.
* Take a cool shower or bath.
* Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing and stay out of the sun as much as possible. If you are outside, wear sunscreen and a ventilated hat (a hat made out of straw or mesh), even if it is cloudy.

**Drink Fluids:**

* Drink more fluids even if you are not very active.
* Avoid alcohol, caffeine and sugary drinks, since these drinks can dry your body out.
* If you are on fluid restrictions or diuretics, ask your doctor about fluid intake.

**If you must be out in the heat, follow these tips:**

* Try to limit your outdoor activity to morning and evening hours.
* If you must exercise, drink two to four glasses of cool, nonalcoholic fluids **each hour**. A sports drink can replace the salt and minerals you lose in sweat.
* Rest often in shady areas – at least every hour.
* Protect yourself from the sun and heat by wearing a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses. Put on sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher. The most effective products say “broad spectrum” or "UVA/UVB protection" on the label.

**Know the symptoms of heat-related illness and what to do:**

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|  **Symptoms** |  **What you should do** |
| **Heat exhaustion*** Heavy sweating
* Weakness
* Muscle cramping
* Cold, pale and clammy skin
* Fast, weak pulse
* Nausea or vomiting
* Fainting
 | * Move to a cooler location
* Lie down and loosen clothing
* Apply cool, wet cloths to as much of your body as possible
* Drink water
* If you have vomited and it continues, seek medical attention immediately
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| **Heat Stroke*** Body temperature over 103° F
* Hot, red, dry or moist skin
* Rapid and strong pulse
* Possible unconsciousness
 | * **Call 911–** **this is a medical emergency!**
* Move to a cooler location
* Lower body temperature with cool cloths or a bath
* Do **NOT** give fluids
 |
| **Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention**  <http://www.cdc.gov/extremeheat/warning.html>  |

**For more information, visit**: <https://www.cdc.gov/features/extremeheat/index.html>

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