News Release

Date: June 19, 2020
For Immediate Release
Contact: 518-565-4840

Rising Temperatures and Concern for Heat-related Illness

PLATTSBURGH, NY, June 19, 2020. Temperatures are forecasted to reach up into the high 80s with high humidity today and this weekend. With this in mind, local health officials are urging residents to protect themselves from heat-related illnesses. One particular concern noted by Clinton County Health Department (CCHD) relates to COVID-19. In order to reduce the potential spread of COVID-19, many businesses and service providers have implemented appointment based systems. People are asked to make an appointment, call upon arrival and wait in their car before going in.

“While this practice protects against the spread of COVID-19, with rising temperatures it may also increase the risk for heat-related illness,” stated Mark Lafountain, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator at CCHD. “Residents are reminded to NEVER leave a child, adult or animal alone inside a vehicle on a warm day. If you need to wait in your vehicle prior to an appointment, options may include finding a shady place to park and using air conditioning to stay cool.” Residents are encouraged to learn to recognize the signs of heat-related illness, which can range in severity, from heat cramps to heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

Symptoms of heat-related illness can include:
- Muscle pains or spasms in the stomach, arms or legs (heat cramps);
- Heavy sweating, paleness, muscle cramps, tiredness, weakness, dizziness, headache, fainting, nausea, or vomiting (heat exhaustion); and
- Extremely high body temperature (above 103°F, taken orally); red, hot and dry skin with no sweat; rapid, strong pulse; or dizziness, confusion or unconsciousness (heat stroke).

Residents are encouraged to contact their medical provider or seek help if they believe they are experiencing symptoms of heat-related illness. Mr. Lafountain cautioned, “To prevent illness, residents should stay alert to the weather and take precautions, such as staying well hydrated.”

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Additional recommendations include:

- Dress in lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing to help keep cool.
- Drink plenty of fluids before you are thirsty, regardless of how active you are. Avoid alcohol, caffeine and sugary drinks, as they will cause you to lose more body fluid. As you sweat, you will need to replenish the fluids your body loses.
- Stay out of the sun as much as possible. People and pets should limit outdoor activities to the times of the day that are typically cooler (i.e., early morning or evening). Rest often in shady areas.
- Stay in air-conditioned areas as much as possible.
- Never leave children or pets inside a parked car, even briefly. Even with the windows cracked, a car will quickly heat up to dangerous temperatures.
- Keeping social distancing in mind, check on your neighbors, friends and family members, especially the elderly and those without air conditioning. Certain populations are at increased risk for heat-related illness, including: older adults (65+); infants and children; those who are ill, have chronic medical conditions, or are overweight; athletes; those without air conditioning; and outdoor workers.


About the Clinton County Health Department:

The Health Department is an accredited full service department serving the residents of Clinton County. The Health Department’s Mission is to improve and protect the health, well-being and environment of the people of Clinton County. Visit our website at www.clintonhealth.org or connect with us on Facebook (@clintonhealth), Twitter (@ClintonCountyHD), and Instagram (clintoncountyhealth).

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