Children and Hot Weather

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Reasons why young children go to the Emergency room when it’s hot

1. Dehydration/electrolyte problems/ kidney issues
2. “General symptoms”
3. Injury
4. Viral and ear infection diagnoses
5. Heat-specific diagnoses

Sheffield et al. Pub Hlth 2018; Knowlton et al. 2009 EHP.
Burden of heat on children in U.S.

1. Deaths – inside cars approximately 30/year (kidsandcars.org)

2. Healthcare visits – maybe as much as 11% of ED visits in warm months (Bernstein et al 2022);

3. Subtle health impacts – short term (e.g., upset stomach, learning issues, sports performance); long term (e.g., in-utero impacts, kidney damage from repeat dehydration) - unquantified
Heat is a risk for exercise-related deaths among people with sickle cell trait.

Other genetic variations can increase heat-health risks too.
Disparities in exposure are clear.
Extreme Heat Safety for babies

Did you know?

Extreme heat days are becoming more common as the climate gets warmer. When it’s hot, babies are more in danger than adults of becoming dehydrated.

Action Plan

- **Keep cool:**
  - Keep babies in cool spaces, ideally with air-conditioning. Coverings should match adults’ clothing plus one light layer.
  - In warm settings, sponge babies with lukewarm water.
  - Never leave a baby alone in a car.

Scan QR code with your phone camera to access these Rxs
Death

Healthcare encounters (hospital, ER, doc visits)

Subtle health effects (prenatal effects, learning impacts, lab value changes)
PEHSU
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A network of experts in reproductive and children's environmental health

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QUICK LINKS

- PEHSU National Classroom
- PEHSU National Resource Catalog
- PEHSU Event Calendar
- Frequently Asked Questions
References

- Exclusionary zoning (The Century Foundation): shorturl.at/ckSY6
- PEHSU network: www.pehsu.net
- “Prescriptions for Prevention” www.nyscheck.org