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To the Press,

Prevention of heat strokes ~Recommended measures~

In order to widely call for the prevention of heat strokes, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) has produced a leaflet titled, “Prevention of heat strokes ~ Recommended measures ~” and has issued an administrative circular requesting that the Local Governments and the Regional Labour Bureaus disseminate information as in the attached.

In preparation for the coming summer season, MHLW promotes measures for dissemination of information on and notification of the prevention of heat strokes. Specifically, in cooperation with the Local Governments and via long-term care operators, senior citizens’ clubs, case workers, and health centers, MHLW calls for attention to people--especially the elderly who are vulnerable to heat strokes--on preventative methods, such as frequent water intakes and the use of air-conditioners.

Prevention of Heat Strokes

~Recommended measures~

The occurrence of heat strokes peaks in July and August. Please correctly understand this physical illness and make an effort to prevent it.

- **Heat strokes can be prevented if preventative measures are properly taken.**
- Even when you get heat strokes, you can be treated by taking appropriate emergency medical measures.
- In order to prevent health problems caused by heat strokes, each individual should have correct understanding of the prevention of heat strokes, be aware of changes in his/her physical conditions, pay attention to the people around him/her, and call for the prevention of the illness to one another.

What heat stroke is...

- Under the conditions of high temperature and humidity, the balance of water and salt in the body is disrupted and thermoregulation does not function properly, causing heat to accumulate in the body, and symptoms such as **muscle aches, heavy sweating, nausea, and fatigue**, appear. In severe cases, the person suffers from the **loss of consciousness**.
- The occurrence of heat strokes increases when environmental conditions, such as high temperature and high humidity, and impacts of individuals' physical conditions, such as feeling ill and their bodies not being adjusted to warm weather, are combined.
- Heat strokes can occur while not only engaging in activities outdoors but also staying indoors quiet--for example, sleeping. Victims can then be taken to hospital by ambulance and in some unfortunate cases die from it.

Be aware, especially when it becomes warm suddenly!

You need to be careful even when you are staying indoors!

Preventative methods for heat strokes

For the prevention of heat strokes, "drinking water" and "avoiding heat" are important!

Water and salt intakes

- Frequent intake of water and salt (Elderly people and children and persons with disabilities should frequently drink water even when they do not feel thirsty.)

Indoor environment unlikely to cause heat strokes

- Adjust temperatures using electric fans and air-conditioners.
- Keep room temperatures from increasing. (e.g. frequent air-ventilation, light-blocking curtains, bamboo blinds, and water sprinkling)
- Frequently check room temperature and measure the WBGT values.
※ WBGT values: The heat indexes calculated based on air temperature, air humidity, and solar radiation. They set out the standard levels in accordance with the intensity of exercise and other physical activities and used for the prevention of heat strokes.
You can browse observed values (8 observation points across Japan) and estimated values (observation points across the country) at the "[Ministry of the Environment \(MOE\) Information Site on Heat Stroke Prevention](#)".

You can get ill if you avoid using air-conditioner beyond your limit!

Measure to be taken in accordance with the person's physical conditions

- Frequently measure body temperatures. (In particular, for elderly people, children and persons with disabilities, and children who cannot control body temperatures adequately)
- Wear breathing, hygroscopic, and quick-drying clothing.
- Cool the person's body temperature by using refrigerant, ice, and cold towels.

Reminder when going outside

- Use parasols and wear hats.
- Use shady areas and frequently take breaks.
- Wear breathing, hygroscopic, and quick-drying clothing.
- Refrain from going outside in mid-afternoon on a good weather day.

If you come across people suffering from heat strokes...

1. To take shelter in cooler areas.
2. To cool the body temperature by taking off clothing.
3. To ensure water and salt intakes.

When you cannot drink water by yourself or lose consciousness, request for rescue teams immediately!

Important reminder

① Sensitivity to heat depends on the person!

- The person's resistance (sensitivity) to heat, which is influenced by his/her physical conditions and adjustment to warm temperatures, differs according to the individual.
- You should take all possible measures to prevent heat strokes, by being mindful of changes in your own physical conditions and in accordance with your resistance to heat.

② Elderly people especially need to be careful!

- About half of heat stroke patients are the elderly (above 65 years old). The elderly's sensory functions against heat and moisture deficiency as well as their bodies' adjust functions to the heat are in decline.
- Elderly people should drink water often even when they do not feel thirsty, and control room temperature by using electric fans and air-conditioners even when they do not feel warm.

③ It is important that people help one another and call for the prevention of heat strokes!

- By each one of us paying attention to those around us and calling for the prevention of heat strokes, the occurrence of heat strokes can be prevented.
- In particular, for the elderly, children and people with disabilities, and children, who are vulnerable to heat strokes, people around them should cooperate and carefully attend them.

④ Do not forget to take preventative measures against heat strokes by being too conscious of power saving!

- While we are asked to take measures to conserve electricity in response to the shortage of electricity during the summer-time period, please be careful not to damage your health by being too conscious of power saving.
- On days with high temperature and humidity, we strongly ask you not to cut electricity to an extent you cannot endure but use electric fans and air conditioners in moderation.

Websites related to information on heat strokes

● Environmental Health Manual on Heat Strokes; Leaflet on the Prevention on Heat Strokes; Heat Strokes Prevention Thermometer Card; Heat Index (WBGT) Forecasts, etc.

- ◇ MOE: Information on heat strokes http://www.env.go.jp/chemi/heat_stroke/
Information Site on Heat Stroke Prevention <http://www.nies.go.jp/health/HeatStroke/index.html>

● Weather forecast; weather information; early warning information on extreme weather, etc.

- ◇ Japan Meteorological Agency:
Be careful about heat strokes <http://www.jma.go.jp/jma/kishou/now/kurashi/netsu.html>
Early warning information on extreme weather <http://www.jma.go.jp/jp/soukei/>

● Promotion campaign for drinking water for health

- ◇ Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW): <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/topics/bukyoku/kenkou/suido/nomou/>

● Preventative measures against heat strokes in the workplace

- ◇ MHLW:
Occupational health measures for the workplace <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/bunya/roudoukijun/anzeneisei02.html>

● Information related to heat stroke patients taken to hospital by ambulance across the country

- ◇ Fire and Disaster Information Agency:
Information on heat strokes http://www.fdma.go.jp/neuter/topics/fieldList9_2.html