

Heatwave tips: Mental health and loneliness



This article was written in collaboration with experts from Griffith University's Ethos Project.

You can take charge of your health in the hot weather. It's important to do so, because heatwaves don't just impact your physical health. They can affect your mental health too.

How can heatwaves affect mental health?

It's vital for older people to seek shelter from heatwaves. Thus, extreme weather may force you to skip regular activities and spend more time in your house.

Unfortunately, doing so can reduce your social interactions and sense of [independence](#). This can negatively impact your mental health, increasing anxiety and loneliness.

Poor mental health can have a negative impact on your body and [brain health](#), too. In fact, [social networks](#) are as important to your health as [exercise](#) and [diet](#).

How to stay connected and mentally healthy

Here are some ways to look after yourself and stay connected, even during the hottest days of summer:

1. Do fun indoor activities.

Do things you can enjoy inside. This can help you reduce [stress](#) while staying out of the heat. For example, you could [read](#), [paint](#), [craft](#), or listen to music.

2. Use technology to stay in touch.

[Reach out](#) to family and friends through video calls, social media, or a simple phone call.

3. Socialise in cooler areas.

- Suggest meeting friends in air-conditioned spaces like [libraries](#), shopping centres, or cinemas.
- Visit community cooling centres. These are public spaces designed for staying cool and socialising during heatwaves. These can include community hubs, swimming centres, or other temperature-controlled locations.

4. Plan safe transportation.

- If traveling outside, consider driving or [ride sharing](#) to avoid walking or taking public transport in extreme heat.
- Check with services like [My Aged Care](#) to arrange transport to a community cooling centre if needed.

5. Consider shaded pool gatherings.

- If suitable, a shaded pool can be a refreshing way to socialise.
- Remember to [stay hydrated](#), limit [sun exposure](#), and make sure the water temperature is safe.

6. Adjust your routine around the weather.

You can still go for your daily walk, but it's best not to do this in the middle of the day. Shift outdoor activities to cooler times of the day, like early mornings or evenings, to avoid peak heat.

Spread awareness, take action

Many older people in Australia don't identify heatwaves as a risk to their health. By sharing this article, you can help others stay safe and connected during hot weather.

Once you understand the risks of heat, you can take proactive steps to protect your health. You can stay safe, connected, and comfortable, without breaking your budget.

Where you can learn more

Explore related articles for more tips.

For heat safety tips:

- [Stay cool and take charge of your health this summer](#)
- [Keeping your house cool in summer](#)
- [Sleeping cool in summer](#)

For mental health tips:

- [Finding mental health support](#)
- [Dealing with loneliness](#)

Learn more about staying safe in the heat at Griffith University's [Ethos Project](#).

Get in touch with LiveUp

Everyone is different so some of these tips may work better for you than others.

If you need more information, get in touch with one of our helpful team members on **1800 951 971**.

CONTACT US

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