

»» NEWSLETTER

HEAT-HEALTH ALERT ADVISE FOR SOCIAL CARE SETTINGS

Introduction: Extreme heat poses serious health risks, including dehydration, heat exhaustion, and heatstroke, often leading to increased deaths. It also indirectly impacts healthcare services by raising the demand for medical and social care due to heat-related illnesses.

Who is particularly at risk in health and social care settings:

- Older people aged over 65 years.
- People with underlying health conditions, particularly heart problems, breathing problems, dementia, diabetes, kidney disease, Parkinson’s disease or mobility problems.
- Pregnant women.
- People with serious mental health problems.
- People who are already ill and dehydrated (for example from diarrhoea and vomiting).
- People with alcohol or drug dependence.
- People who work in jobs that require manual labour or extensive time outside.
- People who live alone and may be unable to care for themselves.

HOT WEATHER

Staying safe in this hot weather

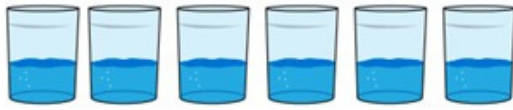
If you or others feel unwell, get dizzy, weak or have intense thirst, move to a cool place, rehydrate and cool down your body.

Effects of dehydration:

- Headache
- Dizziness leading to FALLS
- Kidney stones
- Pressure ulcers
- Increasing confusion
- Poor oral health
- Constipation
- Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)

What can you do to prevent dehydration?

- Ensure residents are drinking 6 - 8 mugs of fluids per day.



Please note: Some residents may have been advised a restricted fluid intake due to kidney or heart conditions. If unsure discuss with GP, Care Home Manager/Clinical Lead.



TOP 10 HYDRATING FRUITS AND VEGETABLES:



IMPORTANT ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN DURING HOT WEATHER

- Conduct a local risk assessment.
- Monitor high-risk individuals during hot weather episodes.
- Follow all local and national emergency response plans.
- Monitor the local and national weather forecast.
- Review storage of medicines to ensure the correct room/fridge temperature is maintained.
- Encourage and enable staff to carry water and stay hydrated.
- Identify, prioritise and monitor individuals most vulnerable to heat-related illnesses.
- In clinical settings with high-risk patients or clients, check body temperature, heart and breathing rates, blood pressure and hydration levels and escalate according to local clinical advice. Consider weighing clients regularly to identify dehydration and rescheduling physiotherapy. Consider adjusting client bedding and personal clothing.

Pertussis (Whooping cough)

What is whooping Cough :

- Whooping cough is caused by the pertussis bacteria and is spread through coughing and sneezing.
- Pertussis is a highly contagious infectious disease that can spread rapidly from person to person through contact with infectious respiratory particles.
- Whooping cough is a notifiable disease in England and Wales.



Transmission:

- Transmission of the infection occurs through respiratory droplets. Cases are most infectious during the early catarrhal phase but remain infectious for up to 21 days following the onset of coughing.

Incubation Period:

- A person with whooping cough is infectious from about 6 days after they were infected—when they just have cold-like symptoms—until three weeks after the coughing bouts start.

Symptoms:

- The first symptoms generally appear 7 to 10 days after infection.
- They include a mild fever, runny nose, and cough, which in typical cases gradually develop into a hacking cough followed by a "whooping" sound (hence the common name of whooping cough).
- Pneumonia is a relatively common complication, and seizures and brain disease occur rarely.

Current Situation About Pertussis:

- New data published by the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) shows cases of whooping cough continue to increase, with 1,319 cases confirmed in March. This follows 556 cases in January and 918 in February, bringing the total number of cases in 2024 to 2,793.
- Sadly, in the first quarter of 2024 (January - March), there have been five infant deaths. Young infants are at the highest risk of severe complications and death from whooping cough.
- During this quarter, while most cases (50.8%, 1,420) were in those aged 15 years or older who usually get a mild illness, the rates of whooping cough remain highest in babies under 3 months of age.
- Uptake of vaccinations that protect against whooping cough has fallen in recent years across the country—in both the program for pregnant women and the infant program.

People most at risk:

- Pertussis can occur at any age.
- There is an increasing number of adults and adolescents who are being diagnosed with pertussis.

PREVENTION:

- Vaccination remains the best defence against whooping cough and it is vital that pregnant women and young infants receive their vaccines at the right time.
- Please see the link below for more information : [Guidance on the management of cases of pertussis \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/guidance/2024-03-29-guidance-on-the-management-of-cases-of-pertussis)



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References :

- [Beat the heat: staying safe in hot weather](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/beat-the-heat-staying-safe-in-hot-weather) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- [Hot weather and health: guidance and advice](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hot-weather-and-health-guidance-and-advice) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hot-weather-and-health-supporting-vulnerable-people/supporting-vulnerable-people-before-and-during-hot-weather-healthcare-professionals>
- UKHSA
- Whooping cough | NHS inform
- [Guidance on the management of cases of pertussis](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-the-management-of-cases-of-pertussis) (publishing.service.gov.uk)