

**Appendix B:  
Categories of  
medicines that may  
increase the risk of  
heat-related illnesses**

## Categories of medicines that may increase the risk of heat-related illnesses

Complete list of categories of medications that may increase a person's risk for negative health effects from extreme heat.

- Alpha blockers<sup>4,6</sup>
- Amphetamines<sup>4,5,6</sup> (e.g., diet pills)
- Anticholinergics<sup>1,2,4,6</sup> (e.g., cough and cold medications, interfere with sweating)
- Anticonvulsants<sup>5</sup> (e.g., seizure medications)
- Antidepressants<sup>3,4,5</sup> (interfere with the body's cooling functions or water/salt retention)
- Antihistamines<sup>4,5,6</sup>
- Antihypertensives<sup>3,4</sup> (interfere with the body's cooling functions/decrease the body's ability to thermoregulate)
- Anti-Parkinsonian<sup>3</sup>
- Antipsychotics/Neuroleptics<sup>3,4,5</sup> (interfere with the body's cooling functions or water/salt retention)
- Benzodiazepines<sup>4</sup>
- Beta blockers<sup>4,5,6</sup> (profoundly impact thermoregulation by decreasing the body's ability to shunt large volumes of hyperthermic blood away from the core and to the skin)
- Calcium channel blockers<sup>4,6</sup>
- Cocaine/illicit drugs<sup>4,5</sup> (decrease the body's ability to thermoregulate)
- Diuretics<sup>1,2,4,5,6</sup> (can cause dehydration, decrease the body's ability to thermoregulate)
- Laxatives<sup>4,5,6</sup>
- Phenothiazines<sup>4</sup>
- Thyroid agonists<sup>4</sup>
- Tranquilizers<sup>1</sup>
- Vasoconstrictors<sup>4,5</sup> (profoundly impact thermoregulation by decreasing the body's ability to shunt large volumes of hyperthermic blood away from the core and to the skin)

<sup>1</sup> George Luber, Michael McGeehin. 2008. Climate Change and Extreme Heat Events. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*;35(5):429–435.

<sup>2</sup> R Sari Kovats and Shakoor Hajat. 2008. Heat Stress and Public Health: A Critical Review. *Annual Review of Public Health*; 29:9.1–9.15.

<sup>3</sup> Health Canada. Communicating the Health Risks of Extreme Heat Events: Toolkit for Public Health and Emergency Management Officials. Available online: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ewh-semt/climat/index-eng.php>

<sup>4</sup> James L Glazer. 2005. Management of Heatstroke and Heat Exhaustion. *American Family Physician*; Volume 71, Number 11.

<sup>5</sup> FamilyDoctor.org Heat Exhaustion and Heatstroke. Reviewed and updated 12/2010. Available online: <http://familydoctor.org/familydoctor/en/prevention-wellness/staying-healthy/first-aid/heat-exhaustion-an-heatstroke.html>

<sup>6</sup> California Department of Public health and the Public Health Institute. Public health Impacts of climate change in California: Community vulnerability assessments and adaptation strategies. Available online: [http://www.ehib.org/papers/Heat\\_Vulnerability\\_2007.pdf](http://www.ehib.org/papers/Heat_Vulnerability_2007.pdf)