July 2019


# Your monthly dose of *good news* about climate change.

Last week the U.S. experienced a serious heat wave. This month we focus on raising awareness of heat, its risks, and actions that can prevent harm. We're encouraged that medical professionals are speaking out, and invite you to talk to your doctor using our icebreakers.

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Handy Heatwave Helpers
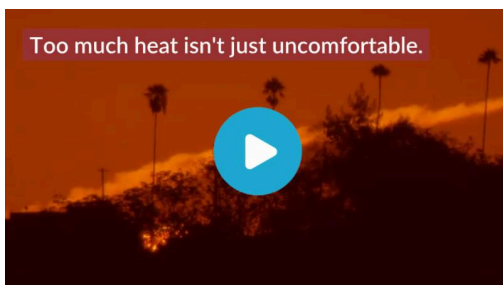
Video: Protect yourself (and the planet) from heatwaves
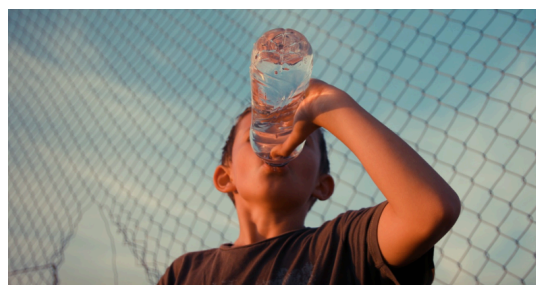
Fact sheet: How to keep children safe in a warming climate

Climate Action To-Do List

Increasing carbon pollution from fossil fuels will add more days of intense heat , but we still have time to transition to a clean energy future. Your action list is a mix of learning and doing to help us all stay safe and cool.

Recognize the symptoms of heat stress

Headache, cramps, exhaustion, dizziness, lightheadedness, increased heart rate, heavy sweating, decreased body temperature.

Watch what happens to your body when a journalist locks himself in a hot room.

Learn who is at risk and protect them

Seniors; infants; pregnant women; kids with asthma; diabetics; people with kidney, heart, or lung diseases; outdoor workers and athletes; the homeless and the socially isolated.
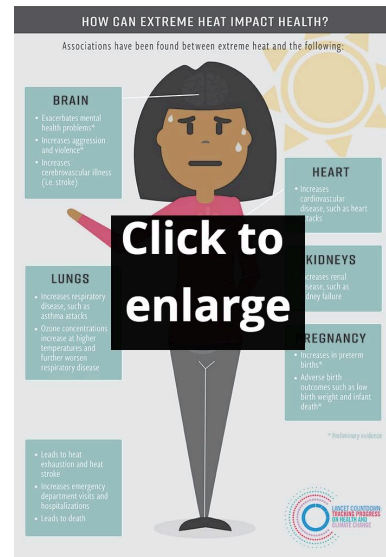
During a heatwave, ensure that your city:

- **Sends heat alerts** that reach people who don't have access to TV or internet.
- **Establishes cooling centers** that are easily accessible to everyone.
- **Makes plans** that accommodate low-income and racially diverse communities.

Longer-term, make sure your city will:

- **Commit to a zero-carbon future.** Many towns and cities want to decarbonize—in fact, they're leading on this issue—and we can play a role in shaping those efforts. Ask to make it easier to walk and bike safely, add green space and access to public transit.

- **Plant trees.** Trees remove pollutants, prevent water runoff, and help cities become more resilient. Add vegetation in the communities that have the least green space today. The difference between the hottest and coolest parts of a city can be *50 or more degrees* because of tree cover.

- **Improve public transit.** Providing more accessible, affordable, and reliable public transit and safer, more available walking and biking routes will curb pollution and decrease heat in the city.

- **Work with organizations addressing inequality.** Racial injustice leads to more deaths in low-income communities. Emergency heat plans—as well as climate action plans—must ensure everyone has equal access to the conditions that will keep them healthy and safe now and in the future.

Doctors Stepping Up and Speaking Out

Climate change is a health emergency, so it's great news that health professionals are talking about how climate changes health, and what we can do about it.

Doctors to the media : Last week, our Co-director Dr. Aaron Bernstein spoke with NBC about the recent heat wave.

Doctors to their patients : Earlier this month, NPR spoke with Harvard Medical School's Dr. Mary Rice about how and why she connects some of her patient's health ailments to changes in the climate.

Medical journals weigh in : Our Co-Directors Gina McCarthy and Dr. Bernstein published an op-ed in the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM) about how medical professionals can respond to recent roll backs in environmental policy.

What Medical Professionals can do:

- Demand that proposed climate policies come with a credible accounting of their health effects.
- Prioritize research evaluating the health effects of carbon reduction strategies.
- Discuss climate action in ways that make it personal.
- Tell stories about the people we see in our clinics, hospital beds, and emergency departments whose health has been compromised by climate change to educate the media, decision makers, and parents.
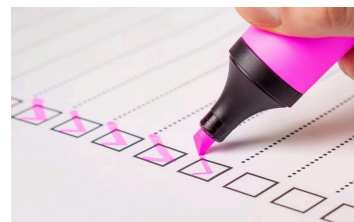- Read our directors' NEJM op-ed for more.

Climate Stories to Help You Sleep at Night

New York climate plan sets 30 year goal for 100% renewable energy
(LA Times)

Climate pledges by cities, states, and businesses add up, Rocky Mountain Institute finds
(Yale Climate Connections)

Clean Energy Scorecard finds that US cities are ramping up their clean energy efforts, but still more work to do
(Clean Energy Scorecard)

Giant batteries and cheap
solar power are shoving
fossil fuels off the grid
(Science)

Water and green energy
produced by a single device
(BBC)

India plants 66 million trees
in 12 hours as part of record-
breaking environmental
campaign
(Independent)