



Using Drugs in Extreme Heat: Reduce Your Risk of Harm

It is especially risky to use drugs in hotter temperatures. Drug use can increase the risk for heat-related illness and make it more dangerous. Some drugs are riskier than others. Alcohol, opioids, and stimulants (such as powder or crack cocaine and methamphetamine) can make you dangerously dehydrated and increase your risk of heatstroke. Heat increases the chance of overamping (stimulant overdose), which can lead to death.

The following tips can help reduce the risk of heat-related illness for people who use drugs:



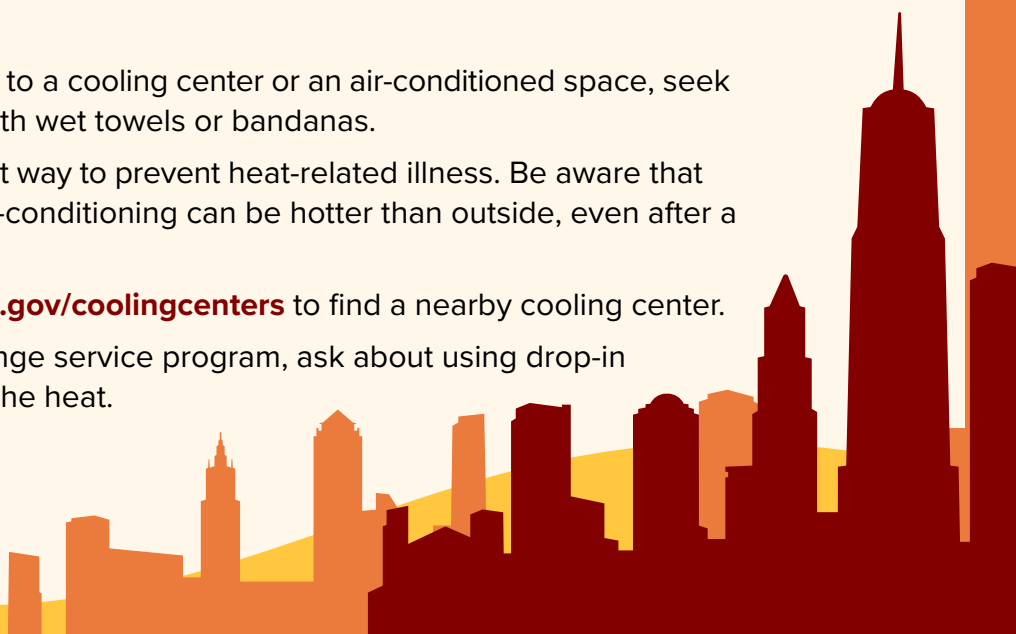
Use more safely

- Start with a smaller amount and see how you feel before taking more.
- Avoid using alone.
- Use with others and in spaces out of the sun.
- Do not use in a parked car — they can become too hot very quickly.
- If you inject:
 - Be careful when choosing injection sites. Extreme heat can cause your limbs to swell and dehydration can make injection difficult.
 - Consider other ways to use, such as snorting or smoking.
- Always carry naloxone, a medication that can reverse an opioid overdose.



Stay cool

- When it is hot outside, go to a cooling center or an air-conditioned space, seek shade, or cool yourself with wet towels or bandanas.
- Air-conditioning is the best way to prevent heat-related illness. Be aware that indoor spaces without air-conditioning can be hotter than outside, even after a heat wave has ended.
- Call **311** or visit finder.nyc.gov/coolingcenters to find a nearby cooling center.
- If you participate in a syringe service program, ask about using drop-in spaces to stay safe from the heat.





Know if you are at high risk

Extreme heat is more dangerous for people with underlying health conditions, especially heart disease, mental and cognitive conditions, and diabetes.



Stay hydrated

Drink plenty of water or drinks with electrolytes (such as sports drinks). Drink regularly, even if you are not thirsty. Drink more often if you are sweating a lot.



Protect your body

Use sunscreen and lip balm. Wear hats and loose, light-colored clothing to protect against the sun and heat.

How to respond to heat-related illness:



If someone has hot, dry, or red skin, a fast-beating heart, or fast and shallow breathing, or becomes unconscious, call **911** and do anything you can right away to cool the person down.



The best way to cool someone down is in an ice bath. If an ice bath is not possible:

- Move them into an air-conditioned space.
- Wrap ice packs or wet towels around their wrists, ankles, and neck.
- Wrap them in sheets soaked in cold water.
- If air-conditioning is unavailable, you can use fans.

For more information on:

Alcohol and drug use services, visit nyc.gov/alcoholanddrugs

How to protect yourself during extreme heat, visit nyc.gov/health/heat



To find a cooling center near you, visit finder.nyc.gov/coolingcenters or scan the QR Code.