

# Is it hot out here?

## Heat exhaustion and heat stroke

The sun is shining and the sky is blue! It's summer! Time to hit the pools, lakes, beaches, golf courses, or your own backyard! July is the perfect month for that, except in 1936, which was the hottest month on record for Nebraska, according to Lincoln Weather and Climate. July may be the perfect time to kick off those summer activities, but it's also the perfect time for heat injuries. Heat injuries can range from more minor heat cramps to serious complications from heat stroke, including swelling in the brain, permanent damage to vital organs, and death.

## What is the difference between heat exhaustion and heat stroke?

Heat exhaustion is a body temperature of normal to 40°C (104°F)

- S/S include diaphoresis, tachypnea, tachycardia, headache, nausea, vomiting
- Normal mentation

Heat stroke is a body temperature greater than 40°C (104°F)

- S/S include confusion, lethargy, and ataxia
- Diaphoresis is usually absent

## The main difference between the two is an altered level of consciousness!

- Risk factors
  - Age – infants/young children and adults over 65
  - Exertion in hot weather
  - Some medications – vasoconstrictors, beta blockers, diuretics, antidepressants, antipsychotics, ADHD medications
  - Some drugs – methamphetamines, cocaine
- Starting treatment
  - COOL THE PATIENT! Evaporative cooling is the most effective – remove clothing, spray with water, and run a fan across the patient
  - Place ice packs in the axilla and groin areas
  - PREVENT SHIVERING! This increases the body temperature. Cover with light blankets as the body temperature normalizes, and use medications such as muscle relaxants
- Prevention
  - Stay hydrated and avoid strenuous activity during the hottest part of the day
  - Avoid excessive clothing
  - NEVER leave anyone, especially children in a parked car! The interior can increase 20°F every 10 minutes or faster in the sun

The following link has great information and tips regarding child vehicular heatstroke.

Copy and paste the link for a short video on runners, heat stroke, and complications!

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/heat-stroke/multimedia/CON-20032814>

For more information, visit

<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/heat-stroke/basics/definition/con-20032814>

Read on regarding child vehicular heat stroke.

**AIR LINK**  
REGIONAL WEST



4021 Avenue B | Scottsbluff, NE 69361

## Child vehicular heat stroke fact sheet

Vehicular heat stroke is largely misunderstood by the general public. Most parents are misinformed and would like to believe that they could never “forget” their child in a vehicle. *The most dangerous mistake a parent or caregiver can make is to think leaving a child alone in a vehicle could never happen to them or their family.* In well over 50 percent of these cases, the person responsible for the child’s death **unknowingly** left them in the vehicle. It can happen to anyone...

### The Greenhouse Effect in vehicles

- The inside of a vehicle heats up VERY quickly! Even with the windows cracked, the temperature inside a car can reach 125 degrees in minutes.
- Cracking the window does NOT help slow the heating process OR decrease the maximum temperature
- Eighty percent of the increase in temperature happens in the first 10 minutes
- Children have died from heat stroke in cars in temps as low as 60 degrees.

### Contributing factors

- A child’s body overheats 3-5 times faster than an adult body.
- Change in normal daily routine, lack of sleep, stress, fatigue, distractions, hormone changes, worry... symptoms that ALL new parents experience!
- Rear-facing car seats look the same whether there is a baby in it or not.
- Children, especially babies, often fall asleep in their rear-facing child safety seats; becoming quiet, unobtrusive little passengers.

### Statistics

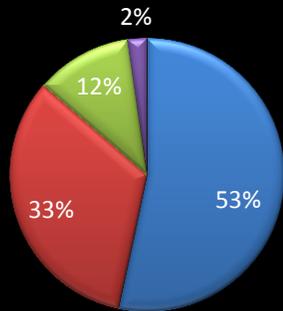
- The **average** number of U.S. child vehicular heat stroke deaths is **37** per year (*one every 9 days*).

### Prevention / Safety tips

- Never leave children alone in or around cars; not even for a minute.
- “**Look Before You Lock**” - Get in the habit of always opening the back door to check the back seat before leaving your vehicle. Make sure no child has been left behind.
- Create a reminder to check the back seat.
- Put something you'll need like your cell phone, handbag, employee ID or brief case, etc., in the back seat so that you have to open the back door to retrieve that item every time you park.
- Keep a large stuffed animal in the child's car seat. When the child is placed in the car seat, put the stuffed animal in the front passenger seat. It's a visual reminder that the child is in the back seat.
- Make a strict policy with your childcare provider that if your child does not show up as scheduled; they will contact you immediately to ensure your child is safe. In turn, you will agree to always call the childcare provider if your child will not be there on a particular day or time as scheduled.
- Keep vehicles locked at all times, even in driveways or garages. Ask home visitors, child care providers and neighbors to do the same.
- Keep car keys and remote openers out of reach of children.
- If a child goes missing, immediately check the inside passenger compartments and trunks of all vehicles in the area very carefully, even if they are locked. A child may lock the car doors after entering a vehicle on their own, but may not be able to unlock them.
- If you see a child alone in a vehicle, get involved. Call 911 immediately. If the child seems hot or sick, get them out of the vehicle as quickly as possible.
- Be especially careful during busy times, schedule changes and periods of crisis or holidays. This is when most tragedies occur.
- Use drive-thru services when available (restaurants, banks, pharmacies, dry cleaners, etc.) and pay for gas at the pump.

## Circumstances

■ Unknowingly left ■ Got in on own ■ Knowingly left ■ Unknown



## Age of Victims

■ < 1 year ■ 1 year ■ 2 years ■ 3 years ■ 4 years ■ 5+ years ■

