



## Heat Warnings for Local Seniors Often Go Ignored

*Study finds heat warnings targeting the elderly are largely dismissed*

This summer has been brutally hot across most of the country, and while heat alerts warning of specific dangers to the local elderly population are being widely issued – they seem to be largely falling on deaf ears.

A recent study out of Kent State University polling major U.S. cities found that nearly 90 percent of respondents over the age of 65 were aware that heat warnings had been issued in their area, but only half of those people did anything about it. The survey found that most seniors thought the messages were targeted toward “older Americans,” a group to which they did not think they belonged.

According to senior care experts from Senior Helpers, the fastest growing provider of in-home senior care across the nation, this disconnect can pose a significant problem when temperatures reach dangerous levels – especially for elderly loved ones living on their own.

“It really is a matter of perceived vulnerability, which is a common issue that we all have to face as we get older,” said Peter Ross with, CEO of Senior Helpers. “Nobody wants to admit that they simply aren’t as physically capable of dealing with factors like extreme heat as they once were. This is why it’s so important to have a second set of eyes available to check in on older friends, family and neighbors when temperatures are consistently as hot as they have been.”

“Elderly individuals might not realize they are over-exerting themselves by doing things they used to be able to do easily on their own, even in the middle of the day,” Ross added.

By taking some very basic precautions, seniors can decrease their potential for heat-related health issues, whether they decide to acknowledge official heat warnings or not.

The following is a list of the top five ways for seniors to beat the heat as recommended by senior care experts:

1. **Stay well hydrated** – keep drinking water throughout the course of the day, even if you’re not thirsty.
2. **Stay out of the sun** – do chores in the morning and evening, and if you venture out for anything longer than a couple minutes, use plenty of sunscreen.
3. **Keep the shades pulled** – closing blinds and curtains can go a long way to keeping the house cool, even in triple digit temperatures.
4. **Hunker down in the afternoon** – the hottest part of the day is from 3 pm to 5 pm, and taking a nap or watching a good movie during this time is a great way to pass the most dangerous hours.



5. **Eat plenty, but eat light** – heavy foods like lots of meat and cheese tend to make your body work harder to digest them, which uses more water and generates more body heat.

“Seniors are more at-risk than other age groups for most heat-related health problems, but taking these simple steps can reduce the risks dramatically,” says Ross. “It’s important for seniors to be smart in these hot summer conditions. Having someone available to check on them, even for an hour per day, can make a huge difference.”

For more information on Senior Helpers and to find out more about local in-home care services, visit [www.seniorhelpers.com](http://www.seniorhelpers.com).