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Heatwave warning for mainland Europe

Extreme weather and heatwave advice for United Kingdom (UK) travellers to Europe

Heatwave reminder for mainland Europe

UK travellers are reminded of the health risks of heatwaves in mainland Europe [1] during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic [2].

Extreme temperatures are already being reported this year in some regions of Europe [3] with Greece [4], Italy [5] and Turkey [6] reporting significantly high temperatures. Wildfires are also being reported in Turkey [7].

Although most of us welcome hot weather, high temperatures can be dangerous [2]. In hot weather, our bodies work harder to maintain an inner core temperature, putting extra strain on the heart and lungs. This, along with fluid and salt loss caused by sweating, can lead to specific heat-related health problems; dehydration, overheating, [heat exhaustion and heatstroke](#) [8]. Excess heat can also aggravate existing conditions, such as cardiovascular, respiratory and kidney diseases or mental health issues [2].

Older people, those with underlying health conditions, babies and very young children are all more vulnerable to higher temperatures. However, adverse health effects of hot weather are largely preventable if sensible precautions are taken, while also following COVID-19 prevention advice [2].

Advice for travellers

Follow the latest official COVID-19 prevention advice offered by the country you are departing from or travelling to during this outbreak.

Check our [County Information Pages](#) for specific guidance about your destination and see our [COVID-19 \(coronavirus\): general advice for travellers](#).

Carry cool water when travelling, drink plenty of fluids and avoid excess alcohol. Everyone is at risk of dehydration in hot temperatures, but babies, children and older people are particularly vulnerable [8].

Avoid physical exertion in the hottest parts of the day and try to walk in the shade.

Wear light, loose fitting cotton clothes and try to keep out of the sun between 11am to 3pm.

Apply sunscreen frequently, especially after swimming and wear a hat and sunglasses as additional protection when you are outside.

Be aware of the additional heat stress that being in a parked car brings. Never leave anyone in a closed, parked car or vehicle, especially babies, young children or animals.

Take care at the beach or swimming pool when you go into the water to cool down and always follow local safety advice.

Look after for those who are vulnerable to heat, especially older travellers, young children, babies and anyone with underlying health conditions.

Stay cool indoors: open windows when the air feels cooler outside than inside; shade or cover windows exposed to direct sunlight; move to a cooler part of the house, especially for sleeping.

If you feel dizzy, weak or have intense thirst and a headache, move to a cool, shaded place to rest and drink water or fruit juice to rehydrate. Get urgent medical attention for any unusual or new symptoms such as confusion or vomiting. If you develop painful muscular cramps or other symptoms, like a persistent headache, you also need to seek help.

Some symptoms of heat-related illnesses, such as a high temperature, headache, loss of appetite, feeling dizzy or shortness of breath can be similar to symptoms of COVID-19. If you or someone else feels unwell with a high temperature during hot weather, you should consider the possibility of COVID-19 and/or heat-related illnesses.

Stay connected - check weather reports and listen to the news so you are aware when a heatwave is forecast [2].

Resources

- [Met Office: Europe weather](#)
- [Public Health England: COVID-19 and summer temperatures](#)
- [Royal Life Saving Society UK: Water Safety Advice](#)
- [Summer travel](#)
- [Sun protection](#)

References

1. [World Meteorological Organization. 2019 concludes a decade of exceptional global heat and high-impact weather. 3 December 2020. \[Accessed 3 August 2021\]](#)
2. [Public Health England. Beat the Heat: Coping with heat and COVID-19. 2021. \[Accessed 3 August 2021\]](#)
3. [Network of European Meteorological Services \(EUMETNET\). Alert List. 3 August 2021. \[Accessed 3 August 2021\]](#)
4. [Hellenic National Meteorological Center. Extraordinary Bulletin of Dangerous Weather Phenomena. 3 August 2021. \[Accessed 3 August 2021\]](#)
5. [Network of European Meteorological Services \(EUMETNET\). Weather warnings: Italy. 3 August 2021. \[Accessed 3 August 2021\]](#)
6. [Turkish Meteorological Service. Extreme Maximum, Minimum and Average Temperatures Measured in Long Period. 3 August 2021. \[Accessed 3 August 2021\]](#)
7. [World Meteorological Organization. Severe wildfires in southern Turkey as seen from space this morning. \(Tweet\). 3 August 2021. \[Accessed 3 August 2021\]](#)
8. [National Health Service. Heatwave: how to cope in hot weather. 28 June 2019. \[Accessed 3 August 2021\]](#)