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—*MEDIA ADVISORY*

## The Department for the Aging Urges Older New Yorkers to Stay Cool in the Summer Heat

*Cooling centers open Friday through Sunday;*

*On Friday seniors should call 311 to find nearest cooling center site*

**NEW YORK, NY – July 16, 2008** – The Department for the Aging (DFTA) urges all older New Yorkers to take the necessary precautions to stay safe and cool in this weekend’s heat. On Friday and over the weekend DFTA, in conjunction with the Office of Emergency Management and other City agencies, will operate cooling centers across the five boroughs. On Friday, cooling centers will have extended hours; over the weekend a limited number of cooling center sites will be open with various hours. On Friday seniors and the general public can identify cooling center sites by calling 311 or going to [www.nyc.gov/oem](http://www.nyc.gov/oem).

Hot weather can be dangerous for seniors, particularly to those who have medical conditions or take medications. Seniors should be mindful of symptoms of heat exhaustion which may include nausea, dizziness, weakness, muscle cramps, pale and clammy skin, disorientation or headache. If a senior begins to experience heat exhaustion symptoms they should call a doctor or 911 immediately. Heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke. DFTA urges New Yorkers to check in on their elder neighbors who may be isolated from friends and family and who may be at a greater risk of heat-related illnesses.

The Department recommends the following for seniors during the extreme heat:

- Avoid the sun, exertion and strenuous activity.
- Drink plenty of water or diluted fruit juices, avoid caffeine and alcoholic beverages.
- Keep rooms well ventilated, open windows and draw the blinds to block the sun’s direct rays. Use an air conditioner to cool down a room.
- Avoid the midday heat. Complete errands during the cooler morning or evening hours.
- Wear lightweight, light colored, loose fitting clothing; wear sunscreen and a hat when outdoors.
- Rest in an air-conditioned area. Consider going cooling centers, air-conditioned senior centers, libraries, stores, malls or other public areas where you can stay cool during the day.
- Cool down with a bath or shower.

Information regarding services and programs for older New Yorkers and all other City services is available by dialing 311. During a declared heat emergency, call 311 for the nearest cooling center. In all emergencies, dial 911.

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