

Keeping children safe in the warm weather

Babies and young children can become ill during very hot weather. Their health can be seriously affected by:

- dehydration
- heat exhaustion and heatstroke
- sunburn

Babies and toddlers

- Babies less than 6 months old should be kept out of direct sunlight
- Older babies should also be kept out of the sun as much as possible, particularly in the summer and between 11am and 3pm, when the sun is at its strongest.
- If you go out when it's hot, attach a parasol or sunshade to your baby's pushchair to keep them out of direct sunlight
- Apply a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30 to your baby's skin. Make sure the product also protects against both UVA and UVB rays
- Make sure your child wears a sunhat with a wide brim or a long flap at the back to protect their head and neck from the sun.



Keeping cool

- Playing in a paddling pool is a good way of keeping babies and children cool. Keep the pool in the shade during very hot weather and supervise children carefully at all times.
- Run them a cool bath before bedtime
- Keep your child's bedroom cool during the day by closing blinds or curtains
- Keep nightwear and bedclothes to a minimum
- A nursery thermometer will help you monitor the temperature of your baby's room. Your baby will sleep most comfortably when their room is between 16C and 20C.

Avoid dehydration

Like adults, babies and young children need to drink plenty of fluids to avoid becoming dehydrated.

0 to 6 months

- Fully breastfed babies do not need any water until they've started eating solid foods. During hot weather they may want to breastfeed more than usual
- If you're bottle feeding, as well as their usual milk feeds, you can give your baby a little cooled boiled water

From around 6 months

Once you have started to introduce solid foods, you should offer your baby sips of water from a cup or beaker with meals. Remember that breastmilk or infant formula should be their main drinks during the first year. In hot weather, you may need to offer some additional water outside of mealtimes.

From 12 months

- Water, breast milk or whole cows' milk should be your baby's main drinks. In hot weather, you can try giving them frozen lollies made from plain water or from very diluted fruit juice to help keep them hydrated
- For older children, give them plenty of fruit and salad to help keep their fluid levels up

