

Introduction

Heat exposure poses risks to people with disabilities, especially during the summer months. Factors that increase heat-related risks for participants can include:

- physical and/or intellectual disabilities
- specific medications that increase the body's sensitivity to UV rays or risk of heat-related illnesses (e.g. antipsychotics and antidepressants)
- a high degree of reliance on others
- behaviours of concern
- swallowing difficulties.

Together We Can International Pty Ltd (TWCI) is committed to managing risks associated with heat and promoting sun safety.

Applicability

When
• applies when assisting participants throughout the mealtime management process.
Who
• applies to all workers and key management personnel involved in mealtime management.

Sun Safety Measures

Together We Can International Pty Ltd (TWCI) will implement basic sun-safety measures at times when the UV index is 3 or higher. Sun protection measures must be implemented even on cloudy days. Refer to the table below for a list of basic sun safety measures.

Sun safety measure	Details
Wear a hat	Wear a broad-brimmed hat that shades your face, neck and ears. Hats with small brims, such as caps, do not provide sufficient protection.
Apply sunscreen	Apply sunscreen that is SPF 30+ (or higher) at least 20 minutes before exposure and every 2 hours. Ensure sunscreen is applied to any skin that is exposed to the sun. An average-sized adult will need around 7 teaspoons of sunscreen applied to their body.



Wear protective clothing	Wear clothing that covers as much skin as possible (e.g. collared shirts with long sleeves). Avoid wearing dark coloured clothing, as it absorbs more heat.
Seek shade	Undertake outdoor activities in the shade, such as under a tree, umbrella or pergola.
Wear sunglasses	Wear sunglasses during daylight hours to protect eyes from sun damage. Choose sunglasses that meet Australian Standard AS/NSZ 1067.
Stay hydrated	Ensure there is sufficient water available for everyone. Participants' fluid intake must align with their mealtime management plan; including manner of fluid consumption and beverage preferences.
Sunscreen Options	Ensuring a number of sunscreen options are available Including lotion, spray and roll on to accommodate participants sensory needs
Registering Sunscreen Applications (on file)	Ensuring TWCI Mentors and Staff are prompting sunscreen application every 2hrs and monitoring required wait times prior to commencing water activities
Hats	Providing spare hats on all external activities and fixed sun safety hats are provided to use for all water sport activities.

Symptoms of Heat-Related Illnesses

Together We Can International Pty Ltd (TWCI) will ensure that Together We Can International Pty Ltd (TWCI) workers are trained in identifying and responding to signs of heat-related illness. This includes dehydration, heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat stroke. Refer to the table below for general signs and symptoms of each condition.

Condition	Symptoms
Dehydration	• feeling thirsty • feeling lightheaded • dark coloured urine • dryness in mouth • headache.
Heat cramps	• heavy sweating • fatigue • thirst • muscle cramps • spasms.

Heat exhaustion	• dizziness and headache • cramping • heavy sweating • fast or weak pulse • nausea/vomiting • pale/cold/clammy skin. If left unaddressed, heat exhaustion and other heat-related illnesses can progress to heat stroke.
Heat stroke	• a body temperature above 40.5 °C • dizziness/confusion • loss of consciousness • fast pulse • extreme thirst • hot/red/dry/damp skin • rapid breathing • nausea. Heat stroke is a medical emergency and 000 must be called.

Managing risks

Together We Can International Pty Ltd (TWCi) will ensure that all risks associated with heat and sun exposure are managed and that all participants can safely enjoy time outdoors. Together We Can International Pty Ltd (TWCi) will manage risks by:

- have a robust risk management system in place, which includes up-to-date risk management plans for each participant
- where possible, avoiding outdoor activities during the hottest parts of the day between September and March during the following times:
 - Between 10am-2pm AEST OR
 - Between 11am-3pm in NT, North QLD or during daylight savings time
- planning ahead and ensuring all sun protection measures are implemented
- if required, rescheduling supports to a different time to avoid excessive sun exposure
- adjusting participant meals to better suit the weather (e.g., providing more cold foods/drinks)
- staying indoors and reducing activity during extreme heat
- reviewing all participant medications to minimise and manage risks of heat-related illnesses
- reviewing participant support plans to ensure all risks associated with heat-related illness are managed and mitigated.
- providing documented reminders to apply sunscreen (these reminders are available on Flowlogic and must be completed by employees every 2 hours as part of mandatory procedures)
- manual sunscreen application form is completed for respite supports, including details of the application and reapplication times (every 2 hours) and uploaded to Flowlogic.

Person-Centered Practice

Together We Can International Pty Ltd (TWCi) is committed to person-centred practice at all times. When managing heat and sun safety Together We Can International Pty Ltd (TWCi) will maintain person-centred practice by:

- seeking participant input and feedback on Together We Can International Pty Ltd (TWCi) supports and services
- modifying services in response to each participant's preferences regarding sun safety (e.g., using spray on sunscreen instead of tub sunscreen, rescheduling supports to reduce sun exposure)
- where required, modifying participant support plans to incorporate management of risks associated with heat-related illnesses.