



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Oklahoma Insurance Provider provides heat safety tips to help seniors thrive during the state's seasonal temperature spikes**

*Extreme heat one of leading weather-related killers in U.S., with senior citizens at greater risk*

**OKLAHOMA** – The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates more than 600 people in the U.S. will die from extreme heat. People 65 and older are at a higher risk of developing a heat-related illness. GlobalHealth, an Oklahoma-based health insurance provider, is providing tips for Oklahoma seniors to stay cool this summer to help prevent heat-related illnesses.

“As we age, our bodies have a harder time responding to the summer heat, which puts seniors more at risk” said Rebecca Anderson, director of utilization management at GlobalHealth. “It is important to know the warning signs and symptoms of heat-related illnesses, and the recommended first-aid steps.”

GlobalHealth is providing information to help Oklahomans prevent and treat heat-related illnesses:

**What is a heat-related illness?** Heat-related illnesses occur when the body cannot properly cool itself. These can include heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps, sunburns, heat edema or heat rash.

**Symptoms of heat-related illnesses.** Heavy sweating, muscle pains, paleness, tiredness and swelling in the ankles or feet are some of the common signs of heat exhaustion. Seniors may also experience dizziness, nausea, spasms or cramps in the stomach, arms or legs. Those with high blood pressure or heart, lung and kidney diseases may also be at risk. Red, hot and dry skin with no sweating, rapid pulse and body temperatures over 103 F can be signs of heat stroke.

**Prevention.** It is important to stay in the air-conditioning or find shade if you are outside. Avoid high-energy activities, drink plenty of fluids and wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing. It is important to wear sunscreen as sunburn affects your body's ability to cool down and can

make you dehydrated. If you need to be outside, protect yourself from the sun by wearing a wide-brimmed hat, sunglasses, and by putting on sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher 30 minutes prior to going out. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggest sunscreens that say “broad spectrum” or “UVA/UVB protection” on their labels. Reapply it according to the package directions. Taking cold showers or baths can also help to keep you cool. If you are on a special diet or your primary care physician has limited your fluids, talk to them about your options.

**Caretaker checklist.** For those seniors in your care, visit them at least twice a day and ask yourself these questions:

- Are they drinking enough water?
- Do they have access to air conditioning?
- Do they know how to keep cool?
- Do they show any signs of heat stress?
- Are they applying sunscreen?

**How to help.** If you think someone is suffering from a heat-related illness, get the person out of the heat and into a cool place. Offer fluids and apply a cold, wet cloth to their wrists or neck. If you have symptoms of heat stroke, call 911 or go to the hospital immediately. Try to cool down until medical help arrives.

### **About GlobalHealth**

GlobalHealth is changing health insurance in Oklahoma by providing genuine care and optimal health for the members it serves. As an industry leader, GlobalHealth is an Oklahoma-based health insurance provider covering individuals in all 77 Oklahoma counties. Working proactively with its members, GlobalHealth engages a personalized management plan to address their specific needs and ensure the best possible health outcomes. GlobalHealth utilizes cutting-edge, predictive data technology as a foundation to deliver improved healthcare as part of its commitment to making health insurance more affordable. Its membership includes individuals who are eligible for Medicare, state, education and municipal employees and federal employees. To learn more, visit [www.GlobalHealth.com](http://www.GlobalHealth.com).

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