# *Stay Safe in the Heat*: Research and Response in Seattle's International District and Rainier Valley Neighborhoods

Northwest Climate Change Conference
October 10, 2017

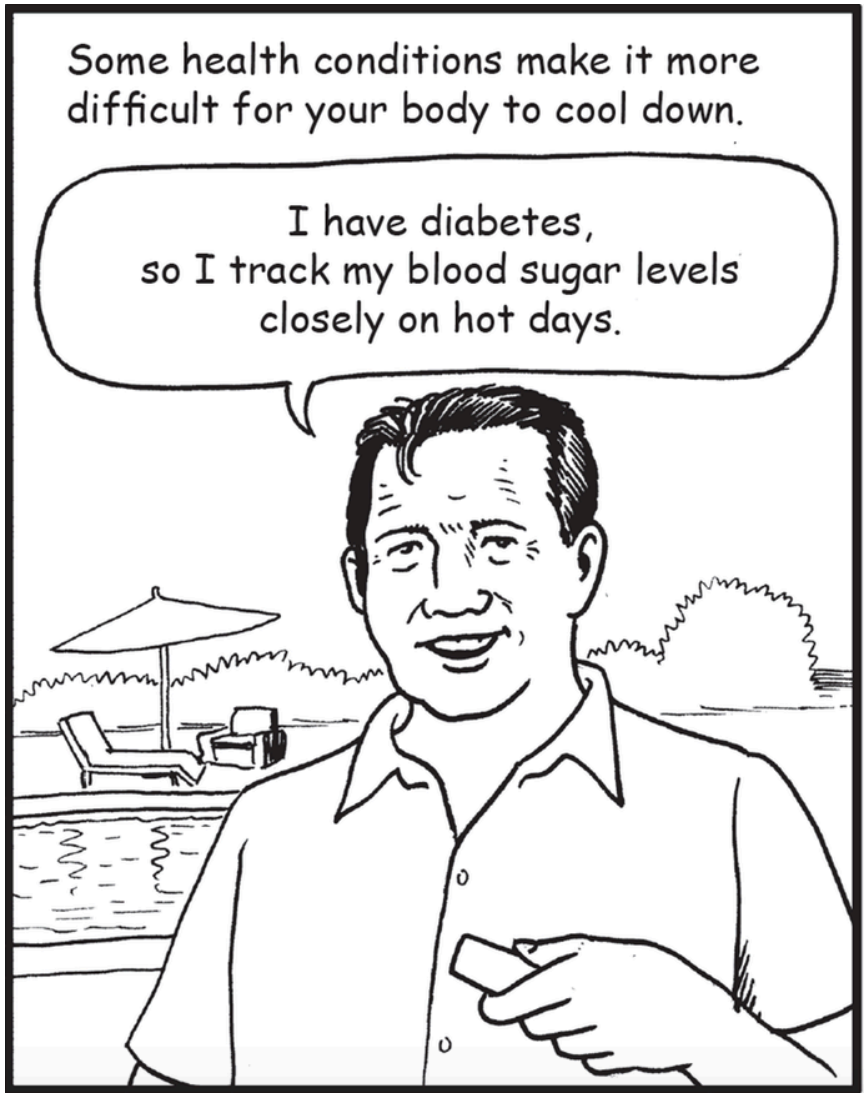
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL & OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
School of Public Health

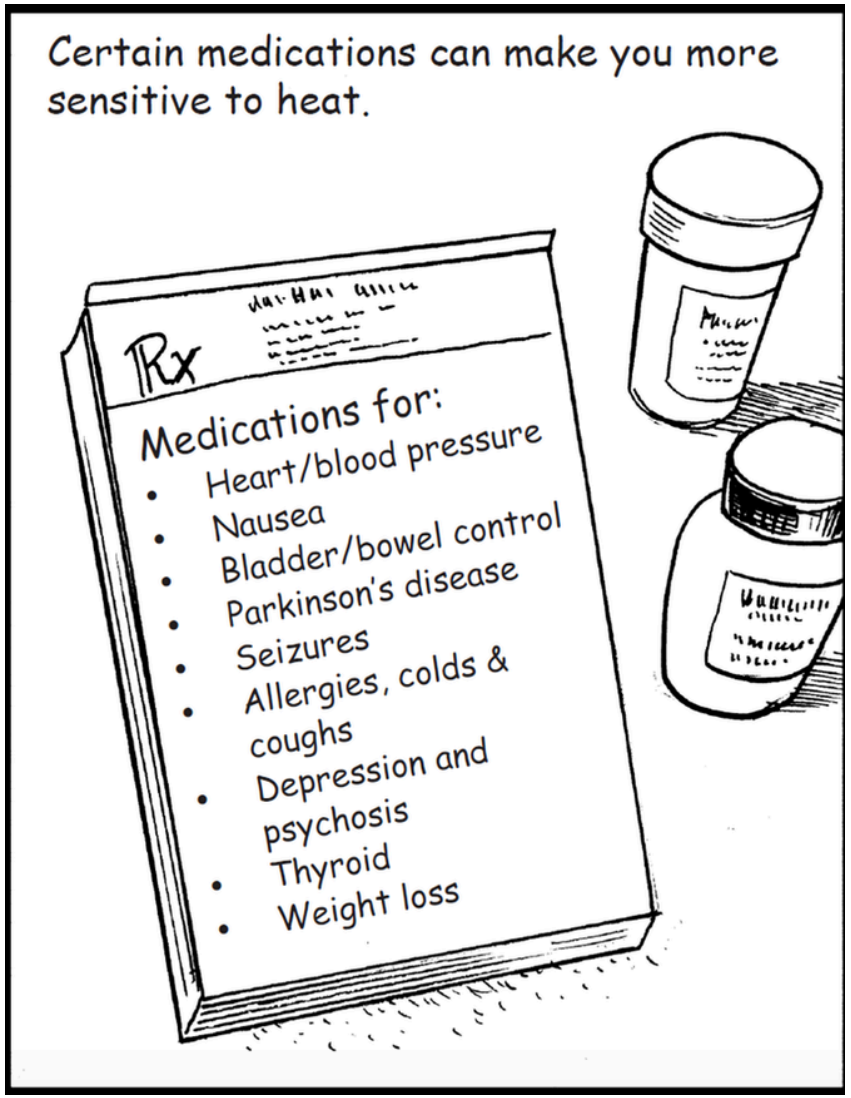
Public Health
Seattle & King County

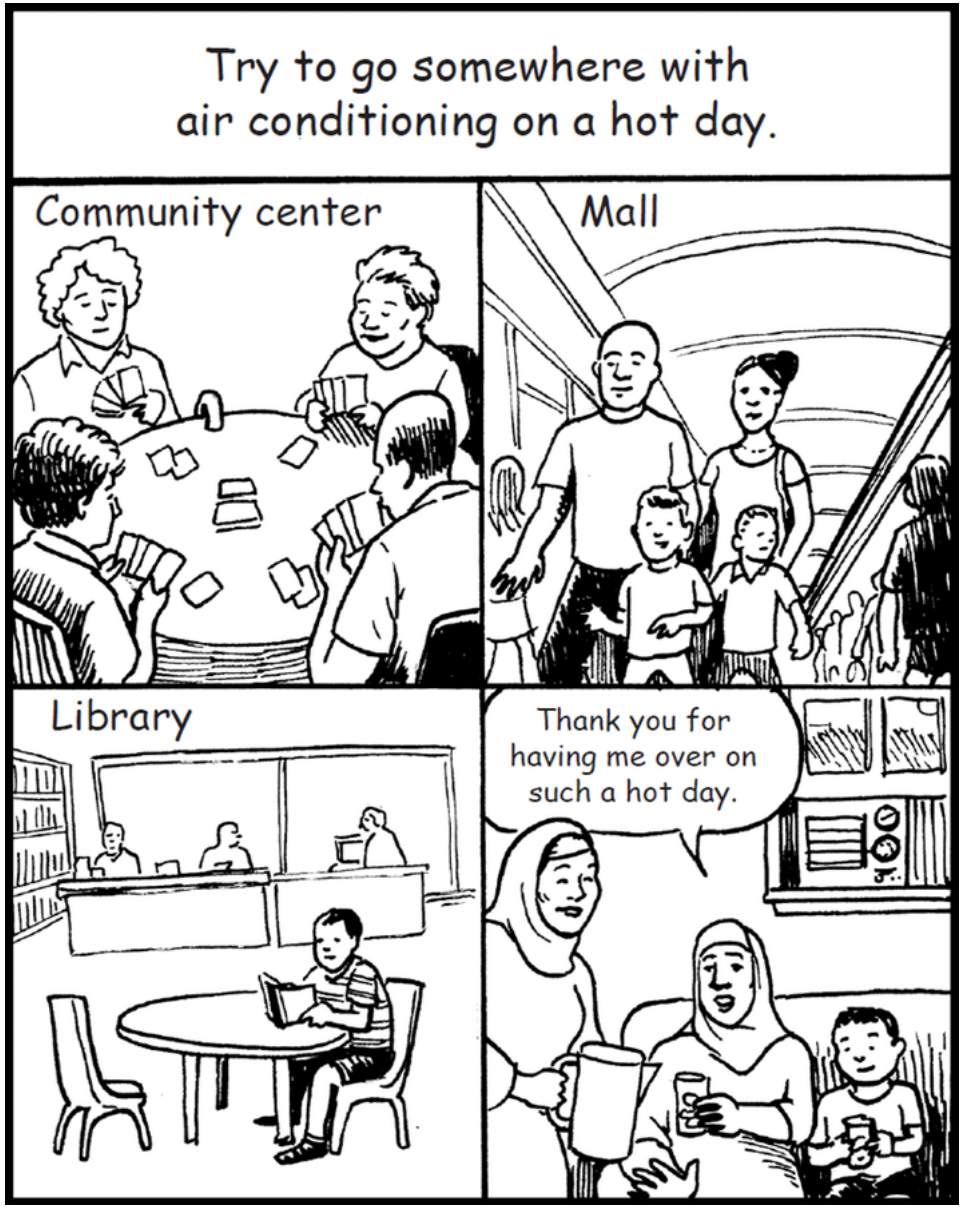
# Awareness

- People recognized that extreme heat could cause dizziness and headaches
- Extreme heat viewed as discomfort rather than health hazard
- Did not know that prolonged exposure can be harmful
- Aware that some groups could be more impacted than others, particularly elderly
- Familiarity with heat in home countries

# Less Aware of….






# Barriers to Keeping Cool

- Lack of accessible, translated and trusted information
- Living in substandard housing, with bedrooms that may or may not have windows
- Safety concerns may prevent people from opening windows at night
- Lack of air conditioning – either can't afford it or buildings can't accommodate it
- Limited transportation to cooling center, health care appointment or community center, safety on buses
- Jobs that require long hours in hot settings

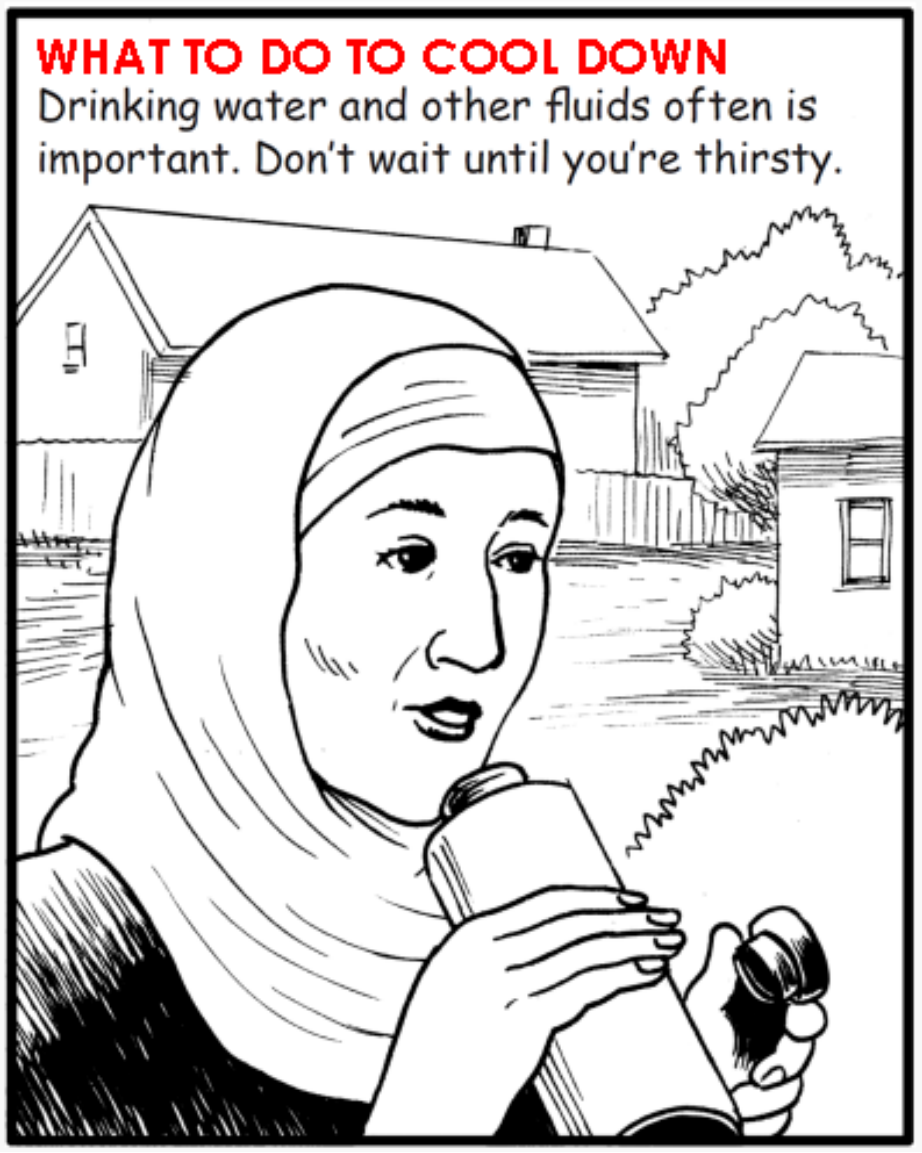
**Heat stroke** is very serious and can be deadly unless treated immediately. Watch for:

- Extremely high temperature
- Red, hot, and dry skin
- Rapid, strong heartbeat
- Mental confusion and unconsciousness

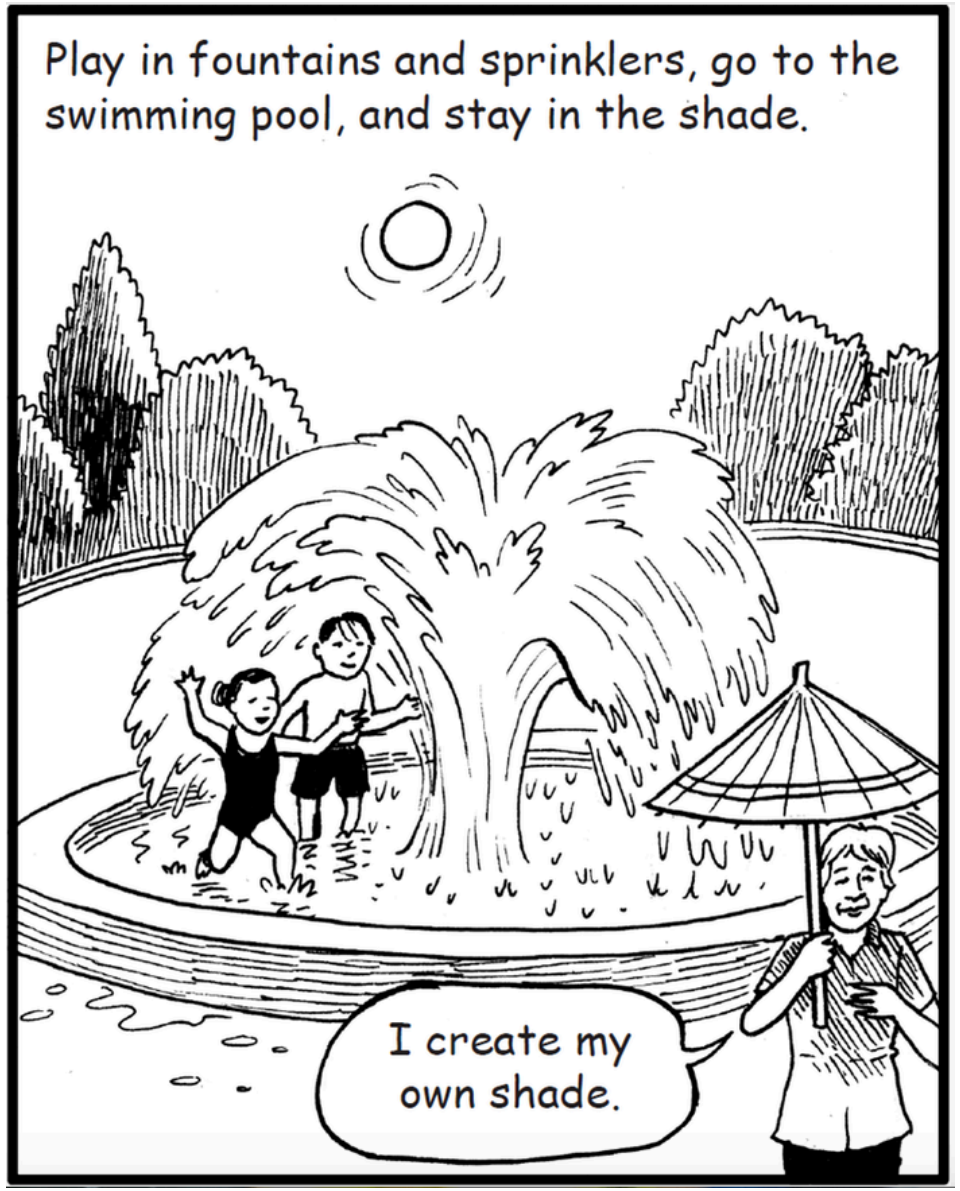
If someone has the symptoms of heat stroke, **call 9-1-1!** Move the person to a cooler place immediately.

# Strategies

- Use fans inside, umbrellas outside
- Wear light clothing
- Drink cool drinks, water
- Boil sugar cane and drink when cool
- Apply cold lotion from the refrigerator
- Avoid hot drinks
- Stay indoors
- Take bus to casinos
- Drink herbal tea
- Eat soups with lotus leaves and seeds



Eat foods with a lot of water in them.
I have wintermelon soup.
Shaved ice with fruit is my hot weather treat!


Play in fountains and sprinklers, go to the swimming pool, and stay in the shade.
I create my own shade.

# Recommendations

- Use trusted sources to share information
- Use alternative methods of communication
- Ensure proper translation and culturally appropriate messaging
- Visual, brief content that reflects the community

# Developing a Comic Zine

- Leveraged small budgets
- Built on past experience
- Partnered on message development
- Interviews informed content
- Tested translations with key partners
- Disseminated through trusted sources
- Actually evaluating!

# ĐẢM BẢO AN TOÀN KHI TRỜI NÓNG

Để biết thêm thông tin:
**www.kingcounty.gov/beattheheat**

Made possible with funding by
the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention,
Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response,
and University of Washington Department of
Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences

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# Other Recommendations

- ”Hot Weather Shuttle”
- Increase frequency of bus routes
- Expand hours of “cooling centers”
- Consider climate change in park design
- One on one; face to face outreach
- Provide educational workshops
- Support cultural centers to act as cooling centers

# Evaluation

Somali Health Board

Vietnamese Senior Association

# Thank You!

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