

In A Nutshell  
August 2023

## Heat

Now that we are deep into our steamy Florida summer I thought the topic “Heat” would be appropriate.

People with multiple sclerosis (MS) often experience a temporary worsening of their symptoms in hot weather or when they run a fever. These temporary changes can result from as little as one-quarter to one-half of a degree elevation in core body temperature, as an elevated temperature further impairs the ability of demyelinated nerves to conduct electrical impulses. Some symptoms are:

- Numbness in the extremities
- Fatigue
- Blurred vision
- [Tremor](#)
- Weakness
- Cognitive problems

MS can result in demyelinating plaques in the brain, optic nerves, and spinal cord. This slows the ability of the affected areas to function, and heat further slows down nerve impulse transmission in these regions.

A worsening of symptoms as a result of becoming overheated (with the most common one being blurred vision) is a phenomenon known as [Uhthoff's sign](#).

There is a phenomenon known as an **MS pseudoexacerbation**, which is the experience of having symptoms appear or worsen due to heat exposure. Fortunately, no damage—such as inflammation, loss of myelin, or new lesions—occurs during such an episode.

Worsening of symptoms in the heat is temporary, and they resolve when the body cools down. Simple cooling techniques usually do the trick.

Here's what you can do to cool off:

- Stay in an air-conditioned environment during periods of extreme heat and humidity.
- Use cooling products such as vests, neck wraps, or a wet bandana during exercise or outdoor activity.
- Wear lightweight, loose, breathable clothing.
- Drink cold drinks or eat popsicles.
- Stay hydrated with electrolyte-containing sports drinks.
- If you exercise outside, pick cooler times of the day to do so (early morning or evening are usually best).
- Use an oscillating fan or air conditioning during indoor exercise.
- Take a cool bath or shower to help reduce core body temperature following activity or exposure to a hot environment.
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- [How Heat Affects Multiple Sclerosis Symptoms \(verywellhealth.com\)](https://www.verywellhealth.com/how-heat-affects-multiple-sclerosis-symptoms/)
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### Just For Fun

I bet Amazon could get you this in one day. Don't wait. The forecast is more of this sweltering heat. Click on the link below.



[Amazon.com: Summer Cooling Vest with 20 PCS Ice packs for Teens, Men and Women, Fishing, Cycling, Running, Cooking, Gardening, Motorcycle : Clothing, Shoes & Jewelry](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07K9K9K9K)