

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT AND URGENT CARE VISITS FOR HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS IN VIRGINIA

June 12-13, 2017

Background

At the time of this report, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) received data on visits to 77 acute care hospital emergency departments (EDs), 13 free-standing EDs, and 58 urgent care centers (UCCs) in Virginia for purposes of public health surveillance. The purpose of this report is to characterize ED and UCC visit trends for heat-related illness.

Chief complaints and discharge diagnoses of ED visits are analyzed by VDH to identify and monitor issues of public health concern across Virginia. The chief complaint is a free-text field that captures the patient's primary reason for seeking medical care as interpreted by the ED registration staff. The discharge diagnosis is a coded field that uses standardized values outlined by the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) 9th and 10th Revision code sets.

Readers are strongly encouraged to review [syndromic surveillance data limitations](#) when interpreting this report.

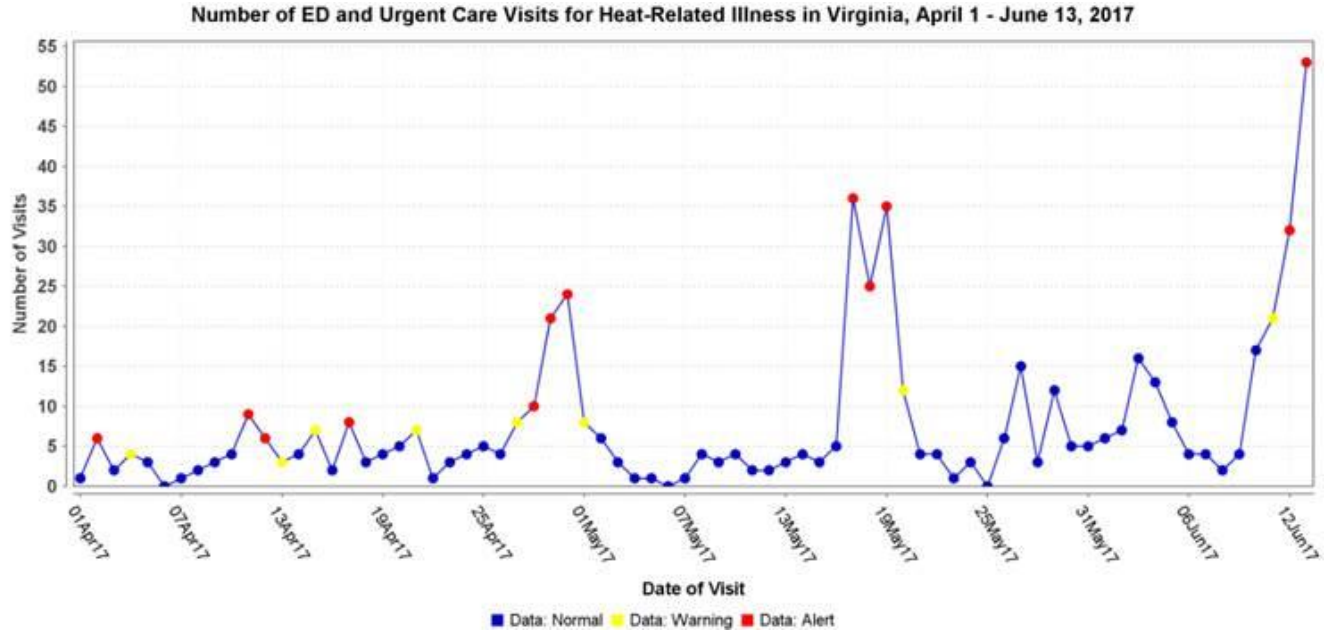
The National Syndromic Surveillance Program (NSSP) receives weather data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for purposes of supplementing interpretation of syndromic surveillance data. These data are then made available to jurisdictions participating in the NSSP, including Virginia.

Methodology

ED and UCC visits for **heat-related illness** were identified based on the [Heat-Related Illness Syndrome Query](#) definition published by the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE).

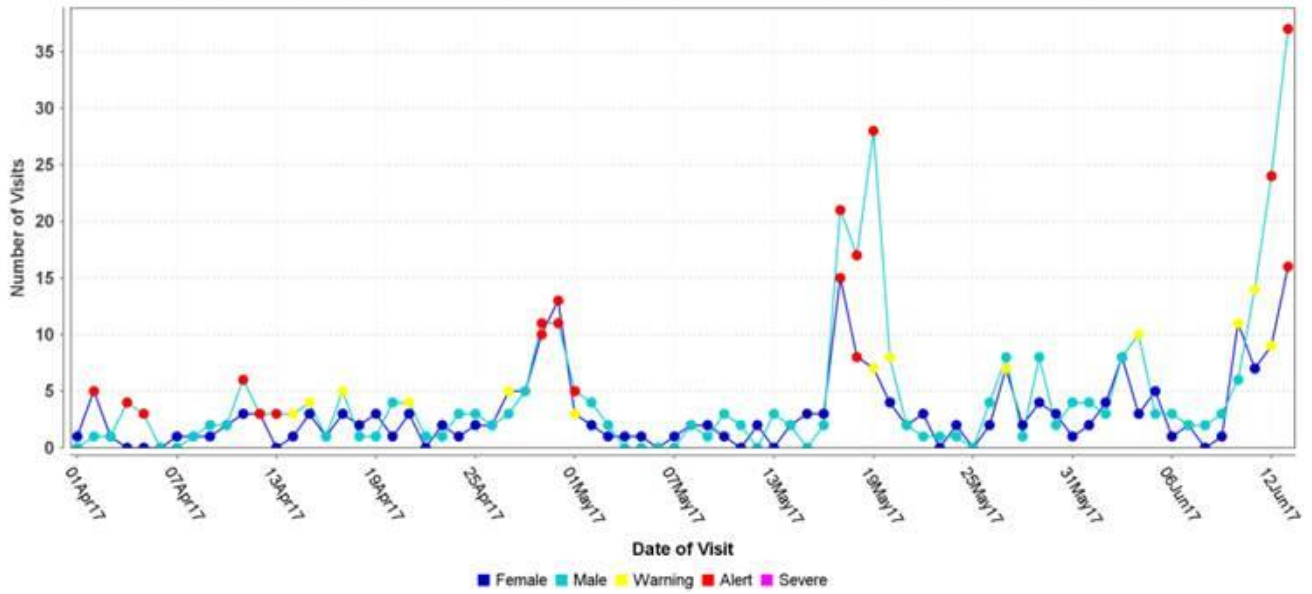
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In response to recent elevated temperatures, the Enhanced Surveillance Team within the Office of Epidemiology, Division of Surveillance and Investigation is conducting surveillance for heat-related illness using ESSENCE.

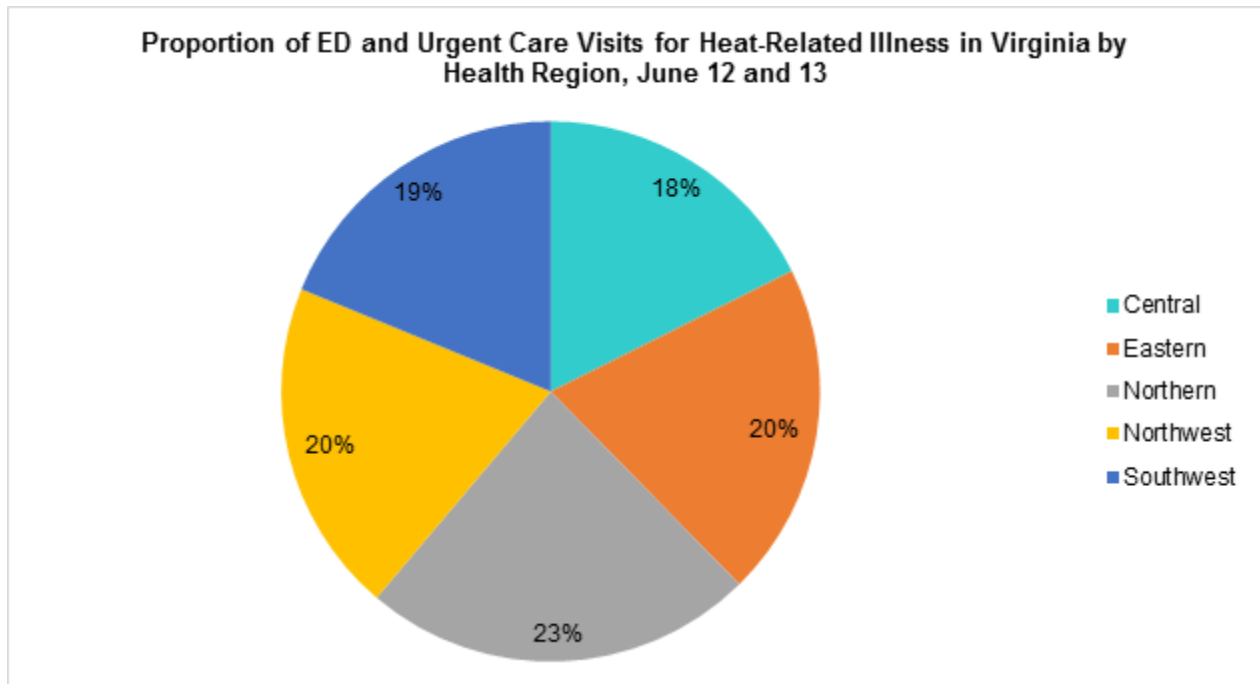


Between June 12 and 13, 86 emergency (ED) and urgent care visits were identified with a chief complaint or diagnosis of heat exposure, heat exhaustion, heat stroke, or heat cramps in the state of Virginia. Of these, 33 (38%) visits occurred on Monday (6/12) and 53 (62%) occurred on Tuesday (6/13).

Number of ED and Urgent Care Visits for Heat-Related Illness in Virginia by Sex, April 1 - June 13, 2017



Of the total 86 visits, 61 (71%) occurred among males with largest proportion of visits (N=17, 28%) among those aged 20-29 years. Only one visit was observed among females in this same age group. Among females, the largest proportion of visits (N=7, 28%) was observed among those aged 40-49 years.



By health region, the 86 visits occurring between June 12 and 13 were distributed fairly equally among the 5 regions.