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

July 17-23, 2020

Background
At the time of this report, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) received data on visits to 84 acute care hospital emergency departments (EDs), 18 free-standing EDs, and 61 urgent care centers (UCs) in Virginia for purposes of public health surveillance. This report characterizes ED and UC visit trends for heat-related illness.

See page 3 for data sources and case definitions used in this report.

Data Summary
A total of 373 ED and UC visits for heat-related illness occurred July 17-23, with 7% admitted to the hospital and 1 suspected heat-related death. The graph below displays the daily number of heat-related visits in Virginia between July 1 and July 23, 2020.

Number of ED and UC Visits for Heat-Related Illness in Virginia by Discharge Type (July 17-23, 2020)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discharge Type</th>
<th>Number of Visits (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admitted</td>
<td>27 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>1 (0.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discharged to Home</td>
<td>335 (90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Reported</td>
<td>10 (3%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Both males and females displayed a decrease in heat-related visits on July 22 compared to the previous day but males still accounted for 70% (N=65) of visits July 22-23. The largest proportion of visits by age on July 22-23 were among adults 30-39 years old (24%, N=22) followed by ages 20-29 (21%) and 40-49 (19%). The graphs below show ED and UC heat-related illness visits in Virginia by sex and age group.
The map below displays [VDH Health Districts](#) with significant increases in heat-related visits on July 22-23 compared to baseline levels. 31 VDH Health Districts (out of 35) experienced elevated levels for heat-related illness from July 17-23, but over the past 2 days 13 [VDH Health Districts](#) remained at elevated levels (red alerts: p-value < 0.01; yellow warning: p-value < 0.05).

Health Districts with elevated visits include 6 in the Eastern Region (Hampton, Norfolk, Peninsula, Portsmouth, Three Rivers, Virginia Beach), 3 in the Southwest (Central Virginia, New River, West Piedmont), and 4 in Central (Chesterfield, Crater, Henrico, Piedmont).

**Data Sources**

VDH analyzes chief complaints and discharge diagnoses of ED and UC visits to identify and monitor issues of public health concern across Virginia. The chief complaint is a free-text field capturing 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) 10th Revision and SNOMED Clinical Terms (CT) code sets. Readers are strongly encouraged to review [syndromic surveillance data limitations](#) when interpreting this report.

**Case Definitions**

ED and UC 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) using the following terms for Chief Complaint and Discharge Diagnosis: heat exhaustion; heat exposure; heat cramps; heat stroke; hyperthermia; ICD-10 codes: T67, X30.; and SNOMED CT codes: 95868006, 95867001.