

Summer Health Tips for Older Adults in Western New York



Patricia Bailey, RN, Elderwood IPA, July 29, 2025

As a home care nurse based in Buffalo working with Elderwood IPA, I assist Medicare and Medicaid plan members through [VNS Health](#), a nonprofit organization providing home and community-based care for more than 130 years. With the heat and humidity in August, I advise even active older adults to take a few simple precautions when temperatures increase.

1. Stay Cool and Hydrated

- Stay indoors during the hottest part of the day (11 am to 4 pm).
- Use air conditioning if possible. If not, visit a cooling center, library, or mall — call 2-1-1 for locations.
- Drink water regularly, even if you don't feel thirsty. Limit caffeine and alcohol.

2. Eat Smart

- Choose light meals and fresh local produce such as berries, cucumbers, and tomatoes.
- Be cautious with food safety—don't leave food out too long in the heat.

3. Move Safely

- Walk early in the morning or indoors at places like Buffalo Botanical Gardens or local malls.
- Swimming is an excellent way to stay active and cool.
- Stretch regularly to keep your balance and flexibility.

4. Stay Connected

- Stay connected by attending community events or calling friends.
- Check in with neighbors or loved ones during heat waves.

5. Manage Your Health

- Take your medications as prescribed and ask your doctor about how they might impact your heat tolerance.
- Keep up with the latest vaccines.
- Stay consistent with routine medical visits.

With some planning, older adults in Western New York can stay safe—and stay calm—all summer.

VNS Health has served New Yorkers for decades. The nonprofit partners with clinical care coordinators from Elderwood IPA, Mohawk Valley Health System, and other regional providers. For more information, visit <https://www.vnshealthplans.org/>.

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