

Some quirky ways to beat the heat

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It is hot outside and inside too, we try to find out some tried and tested no-sweat ways to cool off this summer.

Try sun blockers

When the air outside is dry and cooler than the air inside, hang a damp sheet in an open window. Closing curtains and blinds (ideally with sun-deflecting white on the window side) can reduce the amount of heat that passes into your home by as much as 45 percent.

Spritz yourself

Keep a spray bottle in the refrigerator, and when the going gets hot, give yourself a good squirt. It's all about thermal regulation.

Dress right

Wear one of the widely available synthetic fabrics designed to wick away sweat and that sticky feeling (examples include Coolmax and Nano-Tex); they're not just for athletes anymore. If you prefer cotton, make it thin, light coloured, and, most of all, loose.

The best thing is to have sweat evaporate directly from skin to air and the next best thing is for the sweat to move quickly from your skin to clothing and then evaporate.

Experts suggest that loose, billowy clothes allow air movement next to the skin and help with evaporation.

Spice it up

As people who live in scorching climates, such as those of Mexico and India, know well, eating hot stuff can cool you down.

Chili peppers contain capsaicin, a chemical compound that helps us to perspire more readily. When this sweat evaporates, you experience brief relief.

Shuck your shoes

As the sweat on your feet evaporates, it cools the skin and the blood in your feet. Blood vessels then whisk that blood to other parts of the body, so you'll get a greater sensation of coolness.

Keep yourself hydrated

To replace the moisture that you lose as you perspire, be sure to drink. As you lose water to dehydration, your body temperature rises, so replacing fluids is essential to keeping cool. Avoid beverages that contain caffeine, or lots of sugar, which are dehydrating. Also opt for hydrating foods.

Try a smoothie for lunch, and add more fruits and vegetables to all your meals. Watermelon has the greatest water content of any food out there.

Eat light

There's a reason we reach for salads in the summer. They're easier to digest than, say, a fatty hamburger, which leaves you feeling sluggish in the high heat. Instead, go for fruits and vegetables, which are watery and help keep you hydrated (and cooler).

Try making a "cold compress"

Fill a cotton sock with rice, tie the sock with string, and freeze it for two hours before bedtime. Then slide it between the sheets. Rice retains cold for a long period because it's dense and starchy.