As temperatures increase during summer, community members become more vulnerable to extreme heat. Tribes can set up cooling centers to provide an escape from the heat for their people.

Cooling centers are air-conditioned community buildings like libraries or gymnasiums open to the public and accessible to people with disabilities. If your Tribe is setting up cooling centers, here are some things to keep in mind:

- **Make Sure Air Conditioning is Reliable**

- **Provide Cool Water**

- **Provide Salty Snacks & Healthy Food Options**

- **Station First Aid/Responders on the Scene, or Notify Them About the Center**

- **Give Out Hats, Misters, and Sunscreen if Possible**

- **Communicate Locations and Hours Clearly**

- **Avoid wasted travel and frustrate community members by having the cooling centers open and staffed during the hottest part of the day with hours clearly posted and announced on social media and other platforms.**

**Heat Exhaustion & Heat Stroke**

**Heat Exhaustion:** When the body has lost too much water. Can lead to heat stroke.

- **What to look for:** heavy sweating, dizziness, nausea, and cramping.
- **What to do:** move to a cooler place, drink water, and seek medical attention if symptoms last longer than one hour.

**Heat Stroke:** When the body can no longer lower its temperature. Can be fatal if left unaddressed.

- **What to look for:** headache, nausea, disorientation, and fast pulse.
- **What to do:** seek medical attention immediately, and in the meantime, use damp cloths to lower body temperature. It is advised not to give someone suffering from heat stroke water without medical assistance because they may be too disoriented to swallow and run the risk of choking.

**Heat Exhaustion**

- When the body has lost too much water. Can lead to heat stroke.

- **What to look for:** heavy sweating, dizziness, nausea, and cramping.
- **What to do:** move to a cooler place, drink water, and seek medical attention if symptoms last longer than one hour.

**Heat Stroke**

- When the body can no longer lower its temperature. Can be fatal if left unaddressed.

- **What to look for:** headache, nausea, disorientation, and fast pulse.
- **What to do:** seek medical attention immediately, and in the meantime, use damp cloths to lower body temperature. It is advised not to give someone suffering from heat stroke water without medical assistance because they may be too disoriented to swallow and run the risk of choking.

**Cooling Center Checklist**

National Indian Health Board