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As More Residents Return Home, Health Officials Emphasize Heat Stroke Risk

BATON ROUGE -- More Louisiana residents are now returning to their homes to focus on recovery and rebuilding after Hurricane Isaac. But, the rain has stopped, temperatures are rising and many homes are still without electrical power and air conditioning, so health officials remind the public to be aware of heat stroke and take precautions.

We know everyone's minds are on recovery, but we need everyone to take their risk of heat stroke seriously, said Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals Secretary Bruce D. Greenstein. This is a serious condition that can kill you. So, don't take chances with your health. Drink plenty of fluids, wear light, loose-fitting clothing and sunscreen, and take breaks in the shade or a cool area frequently.

When temperatures get high and weather is humid, people are at an increased risk of becoming ill or dying from heat exposure. Children and the elderly are most vulnerable, but everyone should be aware of the risk.

People's bodies normally cool by sweating but, under intense heat conditions, sweating isn't enough, and people's bodies become unable to cool down. In such cases, emergency department rates are rising rapidly.