

Staying Cool, Part 2

Martok

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It's hot! Uzzi and I lie in the shade and watch our Mom and Dad do the chores; some days she looks pretty frazzled. But there are good ways to stay cool in the summer heat.

Here are easy things to do: Do chores early or late but not through the heat of the day. If you can't avoid midday heat, pace yourself.

Rest often, in the shade if you can, and avoid heavy meals just before chore time.

Mom puts big ice cubes in our drinking water so that we drink enough, but she drinks lots of liquid too: 16 to 32 ounces an hour through the heat of the day, especially while doing the chores. Water, real juice and sports drinks are good choices, she says, but not alcoholic beverages or sugary, caffeine-laden stuff like soft drinks and sweet tea. It's important for humans to stay hydrated, so carrying a bottle of cold along while doing chores is a really good thing.

Wear a hat to deflect the sun's hot rays, and loose-fitting, light-colored, natural fabrics—not dark colors that suck up the sun or synthetics that hold in the heat. A water-soaked, cotton bandana tied around your neck will help you stay cool. Or repeatedly soak the back of your neck and your shirt with the hose while you water your animals; our Mom does that most every afternoon.

Get a pool! A wading pool, that is (if you don't already have a big one). When Mom and Dad are finished outdoors, they soak in the pool they bought for the sheep and my goat friends to drink from while they're in the yard through the day. It looks funny (you should've seen Mom jump out of the pool last week when the UPS truck turned into our driveway), but it works!

And learn to recognize heat exhaustion. Remember what happened to Gwydion the sheep! If you get a headache and feel dizzy or sick to your stomach, stop working! Go to a cool place, grab a cool drink and some towels soaked in cold water, lie down, loosen or take off your clothes, sip the drink and place the towels on your body. Don't overdo it and get sick—your animals need you!

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