
Instructions for Using Heat-Health Social Media Templates



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Instructions pour l'utilisation des modèles de médias sociaux sur la chaleur et la santé

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Acknowledgements

The Heat Action Division gratefully acknowledges the contributions of our provincial/territorial and local health authority partners who reviewed and provided input.

Purpose and Audience

What is the purpose of Health Canada's template heat-health messages?

The templates and accompanying content within this package are intended to support partners in delivering timely, consistent, and locally relevant heat-health messaging before and during periods of extreme heat. Partners can customize the templates with community-specific information, branding, imagery, and service details (e.g., cooling centres, operating hours, contact information) and distribute them through social media channels or other digital channels (e.g., websites, newsletters, digital signage). By providing adaptable, evidence-informed templates, the package aims to reduce the time and resources required for partners to develop heat-related communications while promoting consistent public health messaging across jurisdictions. This project draws from similar initiatives by other organizations within Canada and other countries ([Government of Alberta, 2023](#); [Government of British Columbia, 2025](#); [Manitoba Health, Seniors, and Long-term Care, 2024](#); [U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2024](#); [Metropolitan Area Planning Council, n.d.](#); [RIVM, 2023](#); [Dornsife School of Public Health, n.d.](#)).

What is included in this package?

The package contains **11** customizable templates for social media posts to communicate with the public about extreme heat.

Who is this package for?

This package is intended for public health partners, community organizations, and municipal stakeholders supporting heat response efforts. The social media templates were developed by the Heat Action Division (within the Climate Change and Health Office at Health Canada) and informed by a review of best practices and evidence on effective messaging.

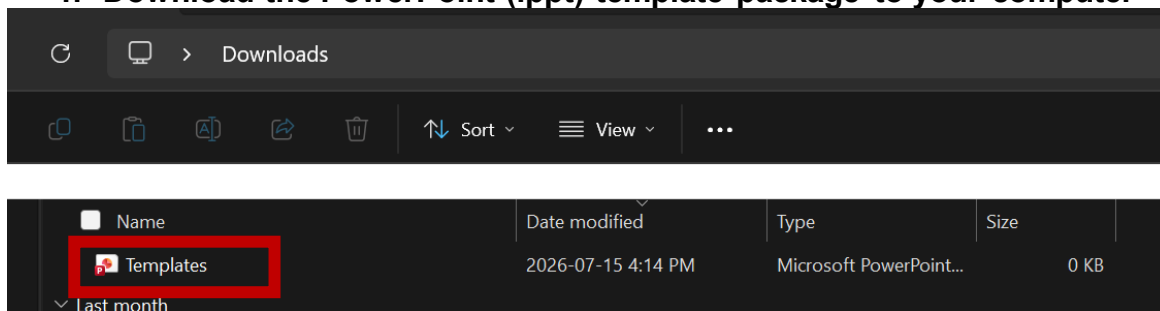
How can the templates be used?

The social media templates are optimized for Meta social media platforms (Instagram and Facebook) but can be adapted or resized for other digital channels (e.g., X/Twitter, websites, digital signage).

Step-by-Step Instructions for Using Message Templates

The included templates are designed to be used as-is, or adapted by you for local use while maintaining clear, consistent messaging. They can be accessed and modified by following the steps below:

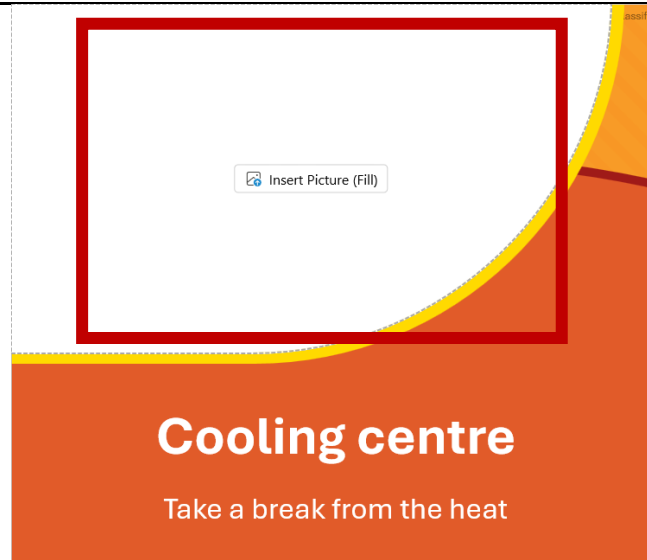
1. Download the PowerPoint (.ppt) template package to your computer



Open the “Templates” file in your desired software or platform (e.g., PowerPoint, Canva)

2. Adapt language and terminology

- a. In the template of your choice, modify any text as needed with your community-specific information. Appendix B contains suggestions on plain language. Locally-relevant information may include:
 - i. Links to heat-related webpage(s)
 - ii. Cooling centre locations, hours of operation, and available services (e.g., water, air conditioning, seating)
 - iii. Accessibility details and transportation options for cooling spaces
 - iv. Contact information
 - v. Any additional information that may be important or relevant for your intended audience.



- b. Use terminology that is familiar and relevant to your community
- c. Translate content into local priority languages, as needed.

3. Customize visuals (optional)

- a. Add or replace images to reflect local context or community diversity
- b. Ensure images remain clear, inclusive, and aligned with the corresponding text and graphics.

4. Add your organization's branding

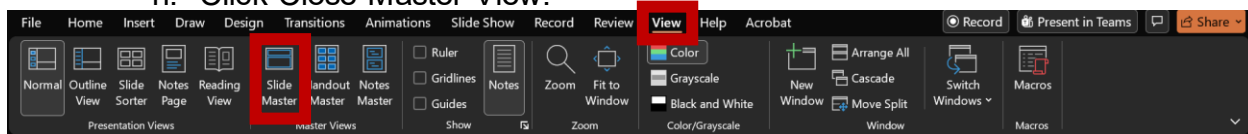
- a. Insert partner logos in the designated areas (top or bottom borders)
- b. Include any required banners or brand elements



5. Change background image in PowerPoint template (optional)

This will allow you to change the orange and yellow background to the colour/image of your choice to align with the organization's colours and branding

- Open the PowerPoint presentation.
- Go to View → Slide Master.
- In the left panel, select the top/main Master Slide (the largest slide at the top).
- Click the background image.
- Choose Picture Format → Change Picture.
- Select the new image you want to use.
- Adjust the image:
 - Use Crop to fit the slide.
 - Resize or reposition if needed.
- Click Close Master View.



6. Create post

- Attach updated social media graphic on your desired platform
- If you wish, copy/paste the corresponding example caption located in Annex A, or use your organization's preferred messaging
- If using the example caption, adapt any information for your intended audience
- (optional) Add any additional information, photos, tags, or hashtags specific to your community or organization

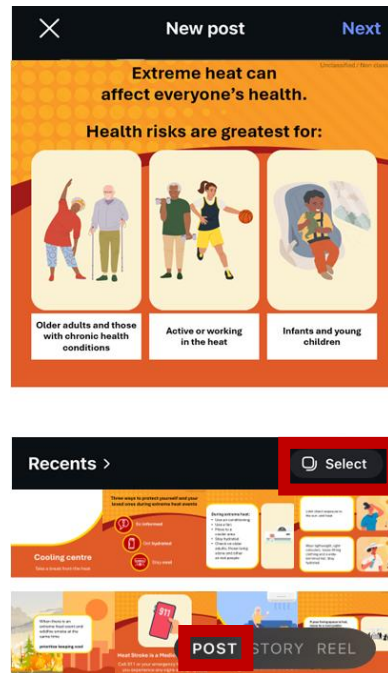


e. Carousel posts:

The social media template graphics were designed as stand-alone messages. However, to share more than one message at a time, multiple graphics can be combined into carousel posts on platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. For example:

- Heat exhaustion/stroke symptoms + when to call 9-1-1

- ii. During a heat wave + if your living space is too hot + stay cool during heat events



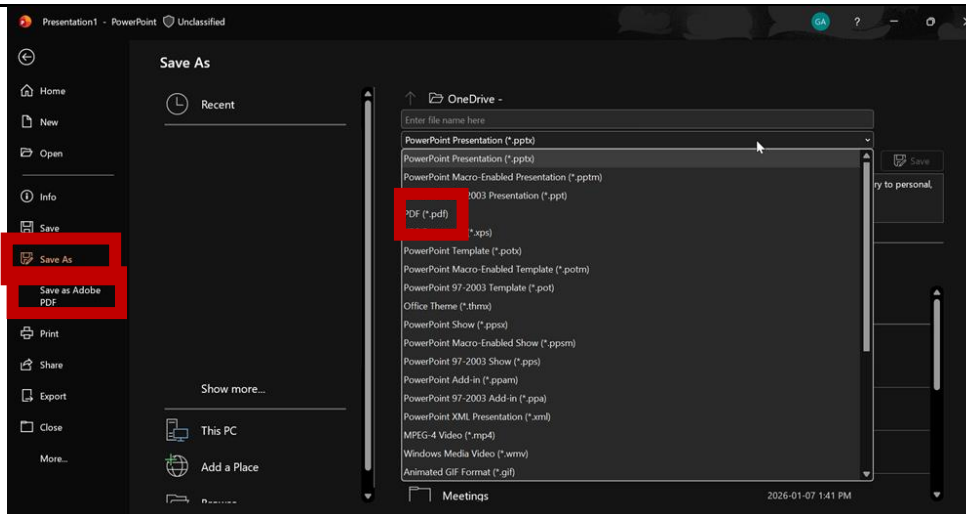
7. Review accessibility and clarity

- a. Confirm text is legible and high contrast
 - b. Add alt-text descriptions for digital posts
 - c. Check that key information (location, hours, directions) is easy to find
- a) Confirm the accuracy of any hashtags, tagged accounts, or links before posting on social media.

Uploading templates in specialized software (Illustrator, InDesign)

The templates are readily available for you to download and edit in PowerPoint (.ppt). If your organization uses specialized graphic design software for posters and social media graphics, such as Illustrator or InDesign, there are two options for doing so:

1. Save the .ppt file as a PDF and open the PDF using Illustrator or InDesign. This option results in better image quality, but the text may need to be copied and pasted from the original file.



2. Export the .ppt file into a SVG file. Once opened in Illustrator or InDesign, the SVG will import the text properly, but some images might look blurry slightly.

Combining the options above will provide the best result and allow for editing in your design program of choice.

Equity Considerations

Reaching high-risk populations

- Prioritize outreach to populations at higher risk during heat events, including:
 - Older adults
 - Infants and young children
 - People with chronic illness or who are physically impaired
 - Socially disadvantaged individuals and communities:
 - Low income
 - Homeless
 - Living alone
 - Newcomers to Canada and transient populations such as tourists
 - Occupational groups including farmers, construction workers, miners, tree planters, etc.
 - The physically active

(Health Canada, 2011)

Translation considerations

- The templates are available in both English and French. However, you may find it beneficial to translate the messages to local priority languages.
- Use culturally appropriate messaging where possible (Health Canada, 2011).
- Work with translators who are familiar with plain language principles for the text they are translating into (Accessibility Standards Canada, 2025).

Additional Resources and Examples

- Government of Alberta. (2023). *Extreme heat social media posts*.
https://www.alberta.ca/system/files/custom_downloaded_images/hlth-extreme-heat-social-media.pdf
- Government of British Columbia. (2026). *Extreme heat preparedness social media package*. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-management/education-programs-toolkits/social-media-toolkits/extreme-heat>
- Manitoba Health, Seniors, and Longterm Care. (2024). *Manitoba Heat Alert and Response System Guide*. (pg. 35).
<https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/environmentalhealth/docs/hars-guide.pdf>

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<https://accessible.canada.ca/standards-and-technical-guides/standards-and-technical-guides-database/can-asc-312025-plain-language?mode=full-html>
- Dornsife School of Public Health. (n.d.). *Extreme heat*.
<https://drexel.edu/dornsife/research/centers-programs-projects/center-for-public-health-readiness-communication/social-media-library/natural-disasters/extreme-heat/>
- Manitoba Health, Seniors, and Longterm Care. (2024). *Manitoba Heat Alert and Response System Guide*. (pg. 35).
<https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/environmentalhealth/docs/hars-guide.pdf>
- Metropolitan Area Planning Council. (n.d.). *Extreme heat communications and social media toolkit*. <https://www.mapc.org/resource-library/extreme-heat-social-media/>
- Health Canada. (2011). *Communicating the Health Risks of Extreme Heat Events: Toolkit for Public Health and Emergency Management Officials*.
https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/hc-sc/migration/hc-sc/ewh-semt/alt_formats/hecs-sesc/pdf/pubs/climat/heat-chaleur/heat-chaleur-eng.pdf
- RIVM. (2023). *Communicatiematerialen*. <https://www.rivm.nl/hitte/communicatiematerialen>
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security. (2026). *Extreme heat: Extreme heat safety graphics*. <https://www.ready.gov/collection/extreme-heat>

Annex A: Sample Captions to Accompany Social Media Posts

The following sample social media captions are provided for partner use when promoting this campaign. These captions may be used alongside the corresponding campaign graphics and can be adapted as needed to align with your organization's voice and channel requirements.

Table 1: Sample captions to accompany template social media graphics

Image	English caption	French caption
	Extreme heat involves high temperatures and can pose health risks. Here are some actions and tips to protect yourself! Be informed: Keep up to date with local weather forecast and alerts and arrange for regular check-ins on your family members, neighbours or friends in case they need help. Get hydrated: Drink plenty of water and if you are hungry, fruits and vegetables are a great option with high water content. Stay cool: On hot days, spend time in cool places like shaded areas or if possible, air-conditioned spots like a public library. Make sure to follow the advice of your local public health unit and adjust your behaviours accordingly. Learn more: canada.ca/heat	La chaleur extrême peut poser des risques pour la santé. Voici des actions et conseils pour vous protéger! Informez-vous : Tenez-vous au courant des prévisions et des alertes météorologiques locales et prenez régulièrement des nouvelles des membres de votre famille, de vos voisins ou de vos amis pour vérifier s'ils ont besoin d'aide. Hydratez-vous : Buvez beaucoup d'eau. Si vous avez faim, privilégiez les fruits et les légumes à forte teneur en eau. Restez au frais : Les jours de forte chaleur, restez dans des endroits frais comme les zones ombragées ou, si possible, des lieux climatisés (p. ex. les bibliothèques publiques). Assurez-vous de respecter les conseils de votre unité locale de santé publique, et d'ajuster votre comportement en conséquence.

Image	English caption	French caption
		En savoir plus : canada.ca/chaleur
 Extreme heat can affect everyone's health. Health risks are greatest for: - Older adults and those with chronic health conditions - Active or working in the heat - Infants and young children	While extreme heat can put everyone at risk from heat illnesses, health risks are greatest for: • older adults • infants and young children • people with chronic illnesses (like breathing problems, mental illness and heart problems) • people who are unable to keep their living space cool • people who work in the heat (indoors or outdoors) • people who exercise in the heat (indoors or outdoors) • people experiencing homelessness • people with low incomes If you are taking medication or have a health condition, ask your health care provider if it either: • increases your health risk in the heat • makes your skin more sensitive to ultraviolet (UV) rays Check on older adults, those living alone and other at-risk people in-person or on the phone multiple times a day. Learn more: canada.ca/heat	Bien que la chaleur accablante rende tout le monde vulnérable aux maladies liées à la chaleur, les risques pour la santé sont plus grands chez : • les adultes plus âgés • les nourrissons et les jeunes enfants • les personnes souffrant de maladies chroniques (comme les problèmes respiratoires, les maladies mentales et les problèmes cardiaques) • les personnes qui ne peuvent pas garder leur espace de vie frais • les personnes qui travaillent à la chaleur (à l'intérieur ou à l'extérieur) • les personnes qui font de l'exercice dans la chaleur (à l'intérieur ou à l'extérieur) • les sans-abri • les personnes à faibles revenus Si vous prenez des médicaments ou avez un problème de santé, demandez à votre prestataire des soins de santé si cela : • vous rend plus vulnérable à la chaleur • rend votre peau plus sensible aux rayons ultraviolets (UV)

Image	English caption	French caption
		Prenez des nouvelles des personnes âgées, de celles qui vivent seules et d'autres personnes à risque, en personne ou par téléphone, plusieurs fois par jour. En savoir plus : canada.ca/chaleur
	Watch for the early signs of heat exhaustion in yourself and others. Signs may include: • High body temperature • Confusion and lack of coordination • Skin rash • Muscle cramps • Dizziness or fainting • Nausea or vomiting • Heavy sweating • Headache • Rapid breathing and heartbeat • Extreme thirst • Dark urine and decreased urination Stop your activity and drink water. Learn more: canada.ca/heat	Surveillez les premiers signes d'épuisement dû à la chaleur que vous ou d'autres personnes pourriez présenter. Les signes peuvent comprendre : • Température corporelle élevée • Confusion et manque de coordination • Éruption cutanée • Crampes musculaires • Étourdissement ou évanouissement • Nausée ou vomissement • Transpiration abondante • Mal de tête • Respiration et pouls rapides • Soif extrême • Urine foncée et diminution du débit urinaire Cessez votre activité et buvez de l'eau. En savoir plus : canada.ca/chaleur

Image	English caption	French caption
	Dress for the weather: Wear loose-fitting, light-coloured clothing and a wide-brimmed hat made of breathable fabric. Heat illnesses are preventable. During extreme heat, the most important thing is to keep cool and hydrated. Learn more: canada.ca/heat	Habillez-vous selon la température : Portez des vêtements amples de couleur pâle et un chapeau à large bord fait de tissus respirants. Les maladies associées à la chaleur sont évitables. En période de chaleur accablante, le plus important est de rester au frais et de s'hydrater. En savoir plus : canada.ca/chaleur
	Address: # Street & Postal Code Phone: Website: Hours: • Monday • Tuesday • Wednesday • Thursday • Friday • Saturday • Sunday Amenities: • Accessible Building • Water Bottle-Filling Station • Transit Accessible Learn more: canada.ca/heat	Adresse : # Rue et code postal Téléphone : Site Web : Heures d'ouverture : • Lundi • Mardi • Mercredi • Jeudi • Vendredi • Samedi • Dimanche Commodités : • Bâtiment accessible • Station de remplissage de bouteilles d'eau • Accessible aux transports en commun En savoir plus : canada.ca/chaleur

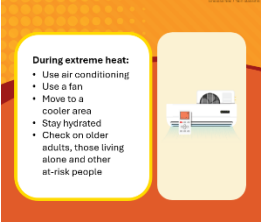
Image	English caption	French caption
	It is important to know how to protect your health when exposed to wildfire smoke and extreme heat together, as they can both harm your health. When there is an extreme heat event occurring with wildfire smoke, prioritize keeping cool, because overheating can be more dangerous to your health. Regularly check local weather forecasts, heat alerts and local air quality conditions using the AQHI or air quality alerts. It's important to frequently check on those who are in your care, neighbours, friends and older family members. Learn more: canada.ca/heat	Il est important de savoir comment protéger votre santé en cas d'exposition à la fumée des feux de forêt et à la chaleur extrême, car ils peuvent tous deux être nocifs pour votre santé. Lors d'un épisode de chaleur extrême accompagné de la fumée des feux de forêt, la priorité est de rester au frais, car avoir trop chaud peut être plus dangereux pour la santé. Informez-vous régulièrement sur les prévisions météorologiques locales, les alertes de chaleur et les conditions locales de qualité de l'air à l'aide de la cote air santé (CAS) ou les alertes de qualité de l'air. Il est important de vérifier fréquemment comment se portent les personnes dont vous prenez soin ainsi que vos voisins, vos amis et les membres de votre famille plus âgés, surtout ceux qui sont plus vulnérables à la chaleur et à la fumée. En savoir plus : canada.ca/chaleur
	Keep your home cool • Block the sun by closing awnings, curtains or blinds during the day. • If possible, open your windows at night to let cooler air into your home. • If you have an air conditioner, be sure	Gardez votre demeure fraîche • Empêchez le soleil d'entrer en fermant les volets, les rideaux ou les stores le jour • S'il n'y a pas de danger, ouvrez vos fenêtres la nuit afin de laisser l'air plus frais pénétrer dans votre foyer

Image	English caption	French caption
	to turn it on before it gets hot. If you are using a window air conditioner, cool only 1 room where you can go for heat relief. • Use a fan to help you stay cool and aim the airflow in your direction. Note: While fans can help you feel more comfortable, they are ineffective at cooling the body at temperatures over 35°C. Learn more: canada.ca/heat	• Si vous disposez d'un climatiseur, veillez à le mettre en marche avant qu'il ne fasse trop chaud. Si vous avez un climatiseur installé dans une fenêtre, ne rafraîchissez qu'une seule pièce où vous pourrez vous rendre pour vous évader de la chaleur • Utilisez un ventilateur pour vous aider à rester au frais et orientez le flux d'air dans votre direction. Remarque : Les ventilateurs peuvent vous aider à vous sentir plus à l'aise, mais ils sont inefficaces pour refroidir le corps à des températures supérieures à 35 °C. En savoir plus : canada.ca/chaleur
	If your home is extremely hot Spend time in a cool place. It could be a tree-shaded area, swimming facility or an air-conditioned spot like a shopping mall, grocery store or public library. Learn more: canada.ca/heat	S'il fait extrêmement chaud dans votre demeure Passez du temps dans un endroit frais. Il peut s'agir d'un endroit ombragé, d'une piscine ou d'un endroit climatisé, comme un centre commercial, un magasin d'alimentation ou une bibliothèque publique. En savoir plus : canada.ca/chaleur

Image	English caption	French caption
 Stay Cool During Extreme Heat	Keep your home cool • Make meals that don't need to be cooked in an oven. Try Canada's food guide's no-cook recipes. • Take cool showers or baths until you feel refreshed. • Block the sun by closing awnings, curtains or blinds during the day. • If possible, open your windows at night to let cooler air into your home. • If you have an air conditioner, be sure to turn it on before it gets hot. If you are using a window air conditioner, cool only 1 room where you can go for heat relief. • Use a fan to help you stay cool and aim the airflow in your direction. Note: While fans can help you feel more comfortable, they are ineffective at cooling the body at temperatures over 35°C. Learn more: canada.ca/heat	Gardez votre demeure fraîche • Préparez des repas qui n'ont pas besoin d'être cuits au four. Essayez les recettes sans cuisson du Guide alimentaire canadien. • Prenez des douches fraîches ou des bains frais jusqu'à ce que vous soyez rafraîchi • Empêchez le soleil d'entrer en fermant les volets, les rideaux ou les stores le jour • S'il n'y a pas de danger, ouvrez vos fenêtres la nuit afin de laisser l'air plus frais pénétrer dans votre foyer • Si vous disposez d'un climatiseur, veillez à le mettre en marche avant qu'il ne fasse trop chaud. Si vous avez un climatiseur installé dans une fenêtre, ne rafraîchissez qu'une seule pièce où vous pourrez vous rendre pour vous évader de la chaleur • S'il fait extrêmement chaud dans votre demeure • Utilisez un ventilateur pour vous aider à rester au frais et orientez le flux d'air dans votre direction. Remarque : Les

Image	English caption	French caption
		ventilateurs peuvent vous aider à vous sentir plus à l'aise, mais ils sont inefficaces pour refroidir le corps à des températures supérieures à 35 °C. En savoir plus : canada.ca/chaleur
 Check your vehicle before locking it Never leave people, especially children, or pets inside a parked vehicle	Never leave children or pets alone in a parked vehicle. Even on cooler days when the outside temperatures are moderate, the temperature inside a vehicle can be dangerously hot. Check the vehicle before locking to make sure no one is left behind. Learn more: canada.ca/heat	Ne laissez jamais les enfants ou les animaux de compagnie seuls dans un véhicule stationné. Même les jours où la température extérieure est modérée, la température à l'intérieur d'un véhicule peut être dangereusement élevée. Vérifiez le véhicule avant de le verrouiller afin de vous assurer qu'il ne reste personne à l'intérieur. En savoir plus : canada.ca/chaleur
 Heat Stroke is a Medical Emergency! Call 911 or your emergency health provider if you experience any signs and symptoms	Heat stroke is a medical emergency! Watch out for the signs and symptoms of heat stroke, which may include: • high body temperature • confusion and lack of coordination • dizziness or fainting • hot, red, dry, or damp skin. Call 9-1-1 or your emergency health provider if you, or someone around you, is showing signs of heat stroke. While you wait for	Le coup de chaleur est une urgence médicale! Surveillez les signes et les symptômes des coups de chaleur, notamment : • température corporelle élevée • confusion et manque de coordination • vertiges ou évanouissements • peau chaude, rouge, sèche ou moite Composez le 9-1-1 ou communiquez avec votre fournisseur de soins de santé d'urgence si vous ou

Image	English caption	French caption
	medical attention, try to cool the person by moving them to a cool place, removing extra clothing, applying cold water or ice packs around the body. Learn more: canada.ca/heat	quelqu'un de votre entourage présentez des signes de coup de chaleur. En attendant l'arrivée des secours médicaux, essayez de rafraîchir la personne en la déplaçant dans un endroit frais, en retirant ses vêtements superflus, en appliquant de l'eau froide ou des blocs réfrigérants autour de son corps. En savoir plus : canada.ca/chaleur

Annex B: Guidance For Adapting Language in Templates and Social Media Captions

This annex provides guidance on adapting the language used in the templates. Partners may tailor content to align with their organization's voice, audience, and communication channels. When making adaptations, consider maintaining inclusive, accessible, and culturally appropriate language that reflects local needs and contexts.

General language suggestions

The following guidance may be important to keep in mind when developing captions for social media content or editing components of the templates. More guidance on plain language can be found in the [Plain Language Standard](#) by Accessibility Standards Canada.

- Choose words that are clear, precise, and familiar to the intended audience.
- Explain or define words that may be uncommon or unfamiliar to the intended audience (Accessibility Standards Canada, 2025).
- When feasible, choose words with one to two syllables to facilitate memory, attention, and processing of the message (Accessibility Standards Canada, 2025).
- Write inclusively by representing to represent the diversity of all people in your audience, regardless of identity, orientation, or social class (Accessibility Standards Canada, 2025).
- Include clear calls to action (e.g., "Visit a cooling center today")
 - Use the active voice when possible to clearly tell the intended audience who or what is doing the action (Accessibility Standards Canada, 2025).
- Use multiple formats and channels to improve reach (Health Canada, 2011)

- Ensure materials are available in multiple languages where possible (Health Canada, 2011)