Medications to Watch in Hot Weather

Hot weather increases the risk of **dehydration, heat exhaustion, and electrolyte imbalance**, and several medicines can **worsen these risks or be affected by them**

1. Diuretics ("water tablets")

Examples:	Risk in heat:	What to watch for:
Furosemide Bendroflumethiazide Spironolactone	Increased fluid loss → **dehydration** Electrolyte imbalance (low sodium/potassium) Increased risk of **acute kidney injury (AKI)**	Reduced urine output Confusion / dizziness Dry mouth Falls

2. Antihypertensives & Antianginal Medications

Examples:	Risk in heat:	What to watch for:
Ramipril, Lisinopril (ACE inhibitors) Losartan, Candesartan (ARBs) Amlodipine Isosorbide mononitrate Ivabradine	Can exacerbate **renal impairment during dehydration** Risk of **low blood pressure (hypotension)**	Impair temperature regulation Increase risk of **heat exhaustion / heatstroke** Can contribute to **dehydration and sedation**

3. Beta Blockers

Examples:	Risk in heat:	What to watch for:
Bisoprolol Propranolol	Reduced cardiovascular response → poor heat compensation May impair sweating and circulation response	Fatigue, dizziness Hypotension, reduced tolerance to heat

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4. NSAIDs (Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs)

Examples:	Risk in heat:	What to watch for:
Ibuprofen Naproxen	Reduce kidney perfusion → **higher AKI risk**, especially if dehydrated Can worsen fluid balance	Reduced urine Lethargy Signs of dehydration

5. Anticholinergic medications

Examples:	Risk in heat:	What to watch for:
Oxybutynin Amitriptyline Chlorphenamine	Reduce sweating → **impaired heat regulation** Increase risk of **heatstroke**	Overheating without sweating Confusion or agitation Dry skin

6. Antipsychotics

Examples:	Risk in heat:	What to watch for:
Risperidone Haloperidol Olanzapine	Impair temperature regulation Increase risk of **heat exhaustion / heatstroke** Can contribute to **dehydration and sedation**	Reduced alertness Increased temperature Reduced fluid intake

7. SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors) and other antidepressants

Examples:	Risk in heat:	What to watch for:
Sertraline Citalopram	Can lead to **hyponatraemia (low sodium)** Risk increased with dehydration	Confusion Seizures (severe cases) Weakness

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8. Medicines Causing Diarrhoea or Vomiting and Laxatives

Examples:	Risk in heat:	What to watch for:
Laxatives (Senna, Lactulose, Laxido) Antibiotics (e.g. co-amoxiclav, doxycycline, erythromycin) Colchicine	Fluid loss → **dehydration** Diarrhoea/vomiting → fluid imbalance Can cause significant diarrhoea	Loose stools, dehydration Reduced intake, weakness Rapid dehydration risk

9. Opioids & sedation

Examples:	Risk in heat:	What to watch for:
Morphine Codeine Benzodiazepines (diazepam, lorazepam) Gabapentin / pregabalin	Sedation → reduced fluid intake Can worsen constipation and confusion	Reduced oral intake Drowsiness Increased falls risk

10. Insulin & some antidiabetic medications

Examples:	Risk in heat:	What to watch for:
Insulin	Appetite changes → risk of **hypoglycaemia** Dehydration can destabilise glucose control	Hypoglycaemia symptoms (sweating, confusion) Poor oral intake

11. Drugs with Increased Toxicity in Dehydration

Examples:	Risk in heat:	What to watch for:
Lithium (Priadel) Digoxin Antiepileptics (e.g. carbamazepine)	Levels rise in dehydration → **toxicity** Levels rise in dehydration → **toxicity** Altered drug levels with dehydration	Confusion, tremor, vomiting Nausea, visual disturbance, arrhythmias Drowsiness, instability, seizures

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12. Immunosuppressants

Examples:	Risk in heat:	What to watch for:
Tacrolimus (Prograf) Ciclosporin (Neoral)	Can impair kidney function → increased risk with dehydration Nephrotoxic risk increases in dehydration	Reduced urine, confusion Fluid imbalance, renal impairment

High-Risk Combination

Particularly important in care homes:

Diuretic + Antihypertensives & Antianginal Medications+ NSAID

This combination significantly increases the risk of
acute kidney injury, especially in **hot weather with dehydration**

Medication review

- Consider **GP/pharmacist review during heatwaves**
- **GP/pharmacist may make t**emporary adjustments in hot weather

Key Takeaway

In hot weather, medications that affect fluid balance, kidney function, or temperature regulation can significantly increase risk—especially in older adults in care settings.