Extreme weather events, including heat waves, are predicted to increase in frequency and severity due to climate change. Prolonged exposure to extreme heat increases the risk of heat stress, which can result in a variety of heat-related illnesses and death. The epidemiology literature identifies several socio-economic, demographic, and environmental factors associated with increased sensitivity to heat (age over 65, racial/ethnic minority, poverty, disability, social and linguistic isolation) and increased exposure to heat (prevalence of heat island contributors such as impervious surfaces and lack of tree canopy). Populations at increased risk of heat stress include the elderly, young children, and persons with chronic disease. Because heat stress prevention strategies can differ for vulnerable sub-populations, it is important for urban planners and public health professionals to identify those most at risk and tailor planning responses to the unique needs of those communities.

**HEAT STRESS SENSITIVITY FACTORS**

Data Sources: MassGIS, US Census Bureau, National Land Cover Dataset, Boston Centers for Youth and Families


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**HEAT STRESS EXPOSURE FACTORS**