

Heat Safety

Heat can be a health hazard

Excessive heat combined with high humidity or extreme heat alone can cause illness and, in extreme cases, even death. Heat stress can also cause a loss of physical and mental efficiency.

Heat Stroke

With heat stroke, the body temperature is very high (105 to 106 degrees Fahrenheit). The skin is hot and dry, and the pulse is rapid and shallow. Breathing is usually rapid. The victim may be confused or may even enter a deep coma. Occasionally seizures develop. Nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea also may be present. Heat stroke may occur with little warning, or it may follow heat exhaustion

What to do: This condition is a medical emergency, dial 911.

For heat stroke (hot, dry skin) lay the person down, remove excess clothing and cool the body with cool water or a fan. If signs of shock are observed, elevate the victim's feet. If the victim is conscious, give them small amounts of water as frequently as tolerated.

Heat Exhaustion

With heat exhaustion the internal body temperature is near normal or slightly elevated. Symptoms of heat exhaustion include severe muscle spasm of the extremities and abdomen (heat cramps). There is heavy sweating, rapid heart rate, extreme weakness and dizziness. Nausea, vomiting, and fainting may also occur

What to do: Heat exhaustion symptoms can usually be relieved by removing the person from the heat, giving fluid to drink and allowing them to lay down.

Elevate the victim's feet if signs of shock are present.

Heat Safety Tips

- Allow yourself to gradually become accustomed to a hot environment.
- Provide frequent rest periods away from the hot environment.
- Drink plenty of water. About 1/2 your body weight in ounces per day is recommended. Waiting until you're thirsty will not provide enough water.
- Watch people when outside for signs of heat stress.
- Avoid special diets that may contain too little salt. The normal American diet provides adequate salt intake.
- Avoid the intake of drugs and stimulates, such as coffee, cigarettes or alcohol immediately before or after heat exposures. Ask your doctor about any medications you are taking, some don't do well with the heat.
- Restrict people with high blood pressure or heart problems from working or playing in the heat.

- Wear proper clothing. Loose fitting and light in color and weight. Wearing of hats will help as well.
- Pace yourself. The heat can catch up quickly.
- Use sun block.