

HEAT RELATED ILLNESS SUMMARY

KNOW THE SIGNS: PROTECT YOURSELF

Remember to check on each other to help spot the symptoms of heat related illnesses before they get serious.

SUNBURN

Sunburn

Caused by over exposure to the sun's UVB rays that burn the skin.

Signs and Symptoms

Red skin that is painful. Includes blistering and peeling of the skin.

Treatment

If skin blisters, seek medical attention. Cool the skin with water and/or lotions. Avoid petroleum or oil-based ointments, which may trap the heat and make the burn worse

HEAT RASH

Heat Rash

Caused by humid conditions where the skin stays wet. Also known as prickly heat.

Signs and Symptoms

Itchy red bumpy rash on the skin. Often appear on neck, chest, groin and under folds of skin.

Treatment

Change into dry clothes and avoid hot environments. Rinse skin with cool water.

HEAT CRAMPS

Heat Cramps

Caused by losing too much salt. The cramps often occur late in the day or evening after the muscles have cooled.

Signs and Symptoms

Painful cramps in arms, legs or stomach. Often the muscles that have been working cramp. Excessive sweating. Hot moist skin. Heat cramps are serious because they can be a warning of additional heat-related illnesses.

Treatment

Heat Cramps might be a sign of Heat Exhaustion. Move to a cool area; loosen clothing. Drink Water every 15 – 20 minutes; must have a snack or a carbohydrate-electrolyte replacement liquid (salt replacement). No salt tablets! Get medical aid if person has heart problems, is on a low-sodium diet, or if cramps do not disappear within 1 hour. Keep away from strenuous work for several hours.

FAINTING

Fainting

Fluid loss and inadequate water intake.

Signs and Symptoms

Lightheadedness. Loss of consciousness after at least two hours of work. Skin is cool and moist. Pulse is weak.

Treatment

GET MEDICAL AID. Person may need CPR. Move to a cool area. Loosen clothing. Make the person lie down. When conscious, offer sips of cool water. Fainting may be due to other illnesses.

HEAT EXHAUSTION

Heat Exhaustion

This condition is particularly dangerous to people with heart conditions or breathing problems. It is caused by the depletion of water and salt.

Signs and Symptoms

Heavy sweating; cool, pale moist skin; body temperature over 38°C (100.4°F); shallow breathing; weak rapid pulse; person is tired and weak, and has headache, confusion, nausea and vomiting; is very thirsty; muscle cramps or vision may be blurred.

Treatment

GET MEDICAL AID. This condition can lead to heat stroke, which can kill. Move the person to a cool area; loosen or remove excess clothing, unless the person starts to shiver; If not nauseated, give fluids like water, juice or rehydrating drinks; fan and spray with cool water.

HEAT STROKE

Heat Stroke

A life-threatening condition. Body can no longer control its own temperature – its water and salt reserves are used up. Body temperature rises rapidly. Most serious!

Signs and Symptoms

Weak, confused, altered mental status, slurred speech. Loss of consciousness (coma). Hot, dry skin or profuse sweating. In later stages, a person may pass out, have convulsions, have a stroke or go into cardiac arrest. Fatal if treatment delayed.

Treatment

CALL AMBULANCE. This condition can kill a person quickly. Move the person to a cool location. Remove excess clothing; fan and spray the person with cool water; offer sips of cool water if the person is conscious.

“IF IT GETS HOTTER, DRINK SOME WATER!”