

Understanding Heat Related Illness- Symptoms

Heat cramps—symptoms include:

Severe, sometimes disabling cramps that typically begin suddenly in the hands, calves or feet.

Hard tense muscles

Nausea

Normal temperature or slight fever

Sweating

Heat exhaustion—symptoms include:

Fatigue

Nausea

Headaches

Excessive thirst

Muscle aches and/or cramps

Weakness

Confusion or anxiety

Drenching sweats, often cold, clammy skin

Rapid weak heart rate

Dizziness

Fainting

Agitation

Heat stroke—symptoms include:

Nausea and vomiting

Headache

Dizziness or vertigo

Fatigue

Hot flushed dry skin

Rapid heart rate

Decreased sweating

Shortness of breath

Decreased urination

Blood in urine or stool

Increased body temperature (104-106 degrees F)

Confusion, delirium or loss of consciousness

Convulsions

Heat stroke can occur suddenly, without any symptoms of heat exhaustion. If a person is experiencing symptoms of heat exhaustion or heat stroke, GET MEDICAL CARE IMMEDIATELY. Any delay could be fatal. Seek emergency medical care for anyone who has been in the heat and who has the following:

Confusion, anxiety or loss of consciousness

Very rapid or dramatically slowed heart rate

Rapid rise in body temperature that reaches 104-106 degrees F

Either drenching sweats accompanied by cold, clammy skin (heat exhaustion) or a marked decrease in sweating accompanied by hot, flushed, dry skin (heat stroke)

Convulsions

Any other heat-related symptom that is not alleviated by moving to a shady or air-conditioned area and administering fluids and salts.

Treatment

Heat cramps and heat exhaustion

Hospitalization usually unnecessary

Give salt tablets and balanced electrolyte drink

Loosen person's clothing and lie down in a cool place

Massage muscles

Heat Stroke

ABCs of life support (Call 911 and start continuous compressions if no pulse)

Hospitalization is required

Rapidly lower person's body temperature using ice packs on arterial pressure points-wrists, neck, groin

Prevention

Wear loose fitting, lightweight, light-colored clothing

Avoid sunburn

Seek a cooler place

Stay hydrated

Never leave anyone in a parked car