

Heat Stress

When you are exposed to extreme heat or you are in a hot environment for prolonged periods of time you may be a risk for heat stress. Heat stress can result in heat cramps and rashes, or even heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Use this handout as a guide to identify heat stroke and heat exhaustion.



Heat Stroke:

Heat stroke is life threatening. The temperature control system, which produces sweating to cool the body, stops working. The body temperature can rise so high that brain damage and death may result if the body is not cooled quickly.

Signs & Symptoms:

- Irrational Behavior, Confusion
- Fast, Shallow Breathing
- Hot, Dry Skin (people with heat stroke stop sweating)

What to do? Call for medical assistance immediately. Place person in the shade, loosen his/her clothing, and try to cool their body temperature by bathing, soaking in cool water, or spraying with cool water from a hose. Offer a small portion (4 oz. every 15 minutes) of cool water **if** person is conscious and able to understand what you are doing.

Heat Exhaustion:

Heat exhaustion is less dangerous than heat stroke. It typically occurs when people exercise heavily or work in a warm, humid place where body fluids are lost through heavy sweating.

Signs & Symptoms:

- Cool, Moist, Pale or Red Skin
- Heavy Sweating
- Dizziness and Weakness

What to do? Follow same procedures as listed for heat stroke but offer liquids more frequently if possible.

Without prompt care, heat exhaustion can quickly become heat stroke.



Keep in Mind:

- Keep your body hydrated: Drink 1-2 cups of water as needed
- Wear lightweight clothing.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol.
- Take breaks in a shady, cool location.
- Don't eat heavy meals before or during hot periods.

For more information visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/heatstress/>
<http://www.webmd.com/fitness-exercise/heat-exhaustion>



Reference: CDC