

# Summer Heat Precautions

---

During a heat wave the body has to work extra hard to maintain a normal temperature. Excessive heat can result in serious health threats by pushing the human body beyond its limits. Young children, elderly people, and those who are sick or overweight are most at risk.

## Measures for Preventing Heat Related Illnesses

- **NEVER** leave children or pets alone in closed vehicles.
- Slow down, avoid strenuous activity.
- Avoid too much sun.
- Plan outdoor games and activities for early morning or evening.
- Avoid extreme temperature changes.
- Stay indoors as much as possible; use fans or air conditioners to cool the air.
- Wear loose-fitting, lightweight, light-colored clothing that will cover as much skin as possible.
- Protect face and head by wearing a wide brimmed hat.
- Drink plenty of fluids, even if you do not feel thirsty, and avoid alcoholic beverages.

## Hot Weather Health Emergencies

**Heat cramps:** Painful spasms, mostly in legs and abdomen, usually the result of heavy exertion and heavy sweating.

### *Recognizing Heat Cramps*

Painful spasms usually in the legs and abdominal muscles that may occur in association with strenuous activity.

### *What to do*

Apply firm pressure to cramping muscles or gently massage to relieve spasms. Replace fluids. Consult your health care provider.

**Heat exhaustion:** Typically occurs when people exercise heavily or work in a hot, humid place where body fluids are lost through heavy sweating.

### *Recognizing Heat Exhaustion*

Heavy sweating, weakness, cold, pale and clammy skin. Weak pulse. Fainting and vomiting possible.

### *What to do*

Lie down in a cool place. Loosen clothing. Apply cool wet cloths. Fan or move person to air-conditioned place. Take sips of water. Consult your health care provider.

**Heat stroke:** A medical emergency- the body's temperature control system, which produces sweating to cool the body, stops working. **Sunstroke:** Another term for heat stroke.

### *Recognizing Heat Stroke*

High body temperature (106+). Hot, dry skin. Rapid, strong pulse. Possible unconsciousness. Individual will likely not sweat.

### *What to do*

Heat stroke is a severe medical emergency. Call 911 or emergency medical services or get the person to a hospital immediately. Move to a cooler environment. Try a cool bath or sponging to reduce body temperature. Use fans and/or air conditioners, to cool the body. **DO NOT GIVE FLUIDS.**