



#### How to Prevent Heat-Related Illnesses

- **Dress for the heat.** Wear light-weight, light-colored clothing. Light colors reflect away some of the sun's energy. Also, wear a sun hat or use an umbrella to shade your face from the sun.
- **Drink water.** Carry water or juice with you and drink continuously, even if you do not feel thirsty. Avoid alcoholic and caffeinated beverages, which dehydrate the body.
- **Eat small meals and eat more often.** Avoid foods that are high in protein which increase metabolic heat. Avoid using salt tablets, unless directed to do so by a physician.
- **Slow down.** Avoid strenuous activity. If you must do strenuous activity, do it during the coolest part of the day, which is usually in the morning between 4 a.m. and 7 a.m.
- **Stay indoors when possible.**
- **Take regular breaks.** When engaged in physical activity on warm days, take time out to find a cool place. If you recognize that you or someone else are showing signs of a heat-related illness, stop activity and find a cool place.

#### Heat-Related Terms

- **Heat Wave:** More than 48 hours of high heat (90° F or higher) and high humidity (80 percent relative humidity or higher) are expected.
- **Heat Index:** A number in degrees Fahrenheit that tells how hot it really feels with the heat and humidity. Exposure to full sunshine can increase the heat index by 15° F.
- **Heat cramps:** Heat cramps are muscular pains and spasms due to heavy exertion. They usually involve the abdominal muscles or the legs. It is generally thought that the loss of water and salt from heavy sweating causes the cramps.
- **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. Fluid loss causes blood flow to decrease in the vital organs, resulting in a form of shock. Signs of heat exhaustion include cool, moist, pale, flushed or red skin; heavy sweating; headache; nausea or vomiting; dizziness; and exhaustion. Body temperature will be near normal.
- **Heat Stroke:** Also known as sunstroke, heat stroke is life-threatening. The victim's 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. Signals include hot, red and dry skin; changes in consciousness; rapid, weak pulse; and rapid, shallow breathing. Body temperature can be very high - sometimes as high as 105° F. Medical attention is necessary.

#### General Care for Heat Emergencies

1. Cool the Body
2. Give Fluids
3. Minimize Shock

**For heat cramps or heat exhaustion:** Get the person to a cooler place and have him or her rest in a comfortable position. If the person is fully awake and alert, have him/her sip on a half glass of cool water every 15 minutes. Remove or loosen tight clothing and apply cool, wet cloths such as towels or wet sheets. Call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number if the person refuses water, vomits or loses consciousness.

**For heat stroke:** Heat stroke is a life-threatening situation. Call 9-1-1. Move the person to a cooler place. Quickly cool the body. Wrap wet sheets around the body and fan it. If you have ice packs, wrap them in a cloth and place them on the victim's wrists and ankles, in the armpits and on the neck to cool the large blood vessels. Watch for signals of breathing problems and make sure the airway is clear. Keep the person lying down.