Heat-Related Illnesses

Signs, Symptoms, Treatment and Prevention

Types of Heat-Related Illnesses



- Heat Rash
- Sunburns
- Heat Cramps
- Heat Exhaustion
- Heat Stroke



Danger Zone

Heat related illnesses can happen during exposure to high temperatures or excessive amounts of time in the sun.

Typically the danger zone would be considered 90F or higher, but heat-related illnesses can happen at lower temperatures as well, especially sunburns.

Heat Rash



Signs/Symptoms

- Red clusters of small blisters that look like pimples
- Usually found on:
 - Neck
 - Chest
 - Groin
 - Elbow creases

Treatment

- Get to a cool, dry place
- Keep the rash dry
- Use powder to soothe
 - Example: baby powder

- Wear loose, breathable clothing
- Use lightweight, breathable bedding
- Take cooler baths/showers
- Drink fluids to avoid dehydration

Sunburns



Signs/Symptoms

- Painful, red, warm skin
- Blisters on the skin

This is a radiation burn that continues to develop over 24 to 72 hours after exposure

Treatment

- Stay out of the sun until healed
- Put cool clothes on sunburn
- Take a cool bath
 - Cool water can help to reduce further development after exposure
- Use Aloe to soothe burn affects.
- Keep area moisturized
- Don't break the blisters
- Apple cider vinegar can help to soothe and quickly heal burns

- Wear protective clothing
- Use sunscreen of SPF30 or higher
- Use hats and sunglasses
- Seek shaded areas

Heat Cramps



Signs/Symptoms

- Heavy sweating during exercise
- Muscle pain or spasms

Treatment

- Stop physical activity
- Find a cool place
- Drink water or sports drinks

Get medical attention if:

- Cramps last longer than 1 hour
- You're on a low sodium diet
- You have heart problems

They make Pedialyte popsicles that help cool you down and replace electrolytes.

- Avoid heavy physical activity in hot environments
- Drink fluids to stay hydrated

Heat Exhaustion



Signs/Symptoms

- Heavy sweating
- Cold, pale, clammy skin
- Fast, weak pulse
- Nausea or vomiting
- Muscle cramps
- Tiredness or weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Fainting

Treatment

- Move to a cool place
- Loosen your clothes
- Put cool wet clothes on
- Take a cool bath
- Sip water

Get medical attention if:

- You are vomiting
- Your symptoms worsen
- Your symptoms last longer than 1 hour

- Wear loose, breathable clothing
- Avoid sunburns
- Drink fluids to stay hydrated
- Avoid excessively hot environments
- Keep activity mild during hotter parts of the day

Heat Stroke



Signs/Symptoms

- Body temp 103F or higher
- Hot, red, dry or damp skin
- Fast, strong pulse
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Confusion
- Losing consciousness (passing out)

Treatment

- Call 911 right away
- Move the person to a cooler area
- Place cool cloths on them or put them in a cool bath
- Don't give them anything to drink

Prevention

- Wear loose, breathable clothing
- Avoid sunburns
- Drink fluids to stay hydrated
- Avoid excessively hot environments
- Keep activity mild during hotter parts of the day

Pay attention to signs of heat exhaustion and act quickly to mitigate before it becomes heat stroke.

References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeh
eat/warning.html

https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeh
eat/pdf/Heat_Related_Illness.pdf