



Heat Related Illnesses



Heat Related Illnesses are avoidable if people are aware of the precautions that can be taken before, during, and after exposure to heat. High temperatures and high humidity can stress the body and inhibit its ability to cool itself making heat illnesses a big concern in the summer months. Heat illness can be classified in the following categories:

Heat Cramps- the most common type of heat illness, described by a spasm of the muscles caused by the dehydration. Although heat cramps can be painful, they usually are not life threatening and resolve with fluid replacement.

Heat Exhaustion- This condition is more serious than heat cramps and occurs when the body has difficulty regulating its body temperature due to the loss of fluid through profuse sweating. Common symptoms may include dizziness, fatigue, headache, nausea, loss of coordination, cool moist skin and a weak rapid pulse. This person should be moved to a cool location and should lie down with the legs elevated. A cool towel can be used to help in the cooling down process. Fluids should be consumed immediately.

Heat Stroke- This is a life threatening condition. The body has completely depleted its supply of sodium and water and the core body temperature is elevated to deadly levels. It can be instantaneous or can occur as a person progressively moves from heat cramps/heat exhaustion to heat stroke. Common symptoms include a high body temperature, a distinct absence of sweating, flushed dry skin, rapid pulse, and difficulty breathing, and/any of the symptoms of heat exhaustion. Advanced symptoms may include seizure, collapse, and/or loss of consciousness. This person must be cooled down immediately and needs immediate medical attention.

Follow These Prevention Methods To Avoid Heat Illness

Relative Humidity (%)

°F	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
110	136												
108	130	137											
106	124	130	137										
104	119	124	131	137									
102	114	119	124	130	137								
100	109	114	118	124	129	136							
98	105	109	113	117	123	128	134						
96	101	104	108	112	116	121	126	132					
94	97	100	103	106	110	114	119	124	129	135			
92	94	96	99	101	105	108	112	116	121	126	131		
90	91	93	95	97	100	103	106	109	113	117	122	127	132
88	88	89	91	93	95	98	100	103	106	110	113	117	121
86	85	87	88	89	91	93	95	97	100	102	105	108	112
84	83	84	85	86	88	89	90	92	94	96	98	100	103
82	81	82	83	84	84	85	86	88	89	90	91	93	95
80	80	80	81	81	82	82	83	84	84	85	86	86	87

Heat Index (Apparent Temperature)

Air Temperature

- Condition athletes for hot environments. Allow the body to adjust over a 10-15 day period. This is known as acclimatization.
- Make sure all athletes have had a pre-participation medical screening by a physician. This will ensure that athletes with risk factors are identified.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Hydration is a continuous process. Don't wait until you're thirsty! By then, there's a good chance that you're already on your way to being dehydrated.
- Electrolyte drinks are good for replacing both water and minerals lost through sweating.
- Avoid caffeinated beverages as these liquids can have the opposite effect and can actually increase the level of dehydration.
- Educate athletes, coaches, and parents on the prevention, recognition, and treatment of heat illnesses.
- Take frequent water breaks, especially if you notice you're getting a headache or you start feeling overheated.
- Wear lightweight, light colored clothing during activity.

• Avoid activity outdoors when the conditions are both hot and high humidity is present (see chart).

Extreme Danger	Danger	Extreme Caution	Caution
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