

Understanding Heat-Related Illness -- Symptoms

What Are the Symptoms of Heat-Related Illnesses?

Heat cramp symptoms include:

- Severe, sometimes disabling, cramps that typically begin suddenly in the hands, calves, or feet.
- Hard, tense muscles.

Heat exhaustion symptoms include:

- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Headaches
- Excessive thirst
- Muscle aches and cramps
- Weakness
- Confusion or anxiety
- Drenching sweats, often accompanied by cold, clammy skin.
- Slowed or weakened heartbeat.
- Dizziness
- Fainting
- Agitation

Heat exhaustion requires immediate attention but is not usually life-threatening.

Heat stroke symptoms include:

- Nausea and vomiting.
- Headache.
- Dizziness or vertigo.
- Fatigue.
- Hot, flushed, dry skin.
- Rapid heart rate.
- Decreased sweating.
- Shortness of breath.
- Decreased urination.
- Blood in urine or stool.
- Increased body temperature (104 to 106 degrees).
- Confusion, delirium, or loss of consciousness.
- Convulsions.

Heat stroke can occur suddenly, without any symptoms of heat exhaustion. If a person is experiencing symptoms of heat exhaustion or heat stroke, **OBTAIN MEDICAL CARE IMMEDIATELY**.

Any delay could be fatal. You should seek emergency medical care for anyone who has been in the heat and who has the following symptoms:

- Confusion, anxiety or loss of consciousness.
- Very rapid or dramatically slowed heartbeat.
- Rapid rise in body temperature that reaches 104 to 106 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Either drenching sweats accompanied by cold, clammy skin (which may indicate heat exhaustion); or a marked decrease in sweating accompanied by hot, flushed, dry skin (which may indicate heat stroke).
- Convulsions.

Any other heat-related symptom that is not alleviated by moving to a shady or air-conditioned area and administering fluids and salts.