



Heat Illness

What is Heat Illness?

"Heat Illness" means a serious medical condition resulting from the body's inability to cope with a particular heat load, and includes heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat syncope, and heat stroke.

Human beings need to maintain their internal body temperature within a very narrow range of a few degrees above or below 98.6° F. People suffer from heat illness when their bodies are not able to get rid of excess heat and properly cool.

Heat-Related Illness	Symptoms and Signs
Heat stroke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confusion • Slurred speech • Unconsciousness • Seizures • Heavy sweating or hot, dry skin • Very high body temperature • Rapid heart rate
Heat exhaustion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fatigue • Irritability • Thirst • Nausea or vomiting • Dizziness or lightheadedness • Heavy sweating • Elevated body temperature or fast heart rate
Heat cramps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muscle spasms or pain • Usually in legs, arms, or trunk
Heat syncope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fainting • Dizziness
Heat rash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clusters of red bumps on skin • Often appears on neck, upper chest, and skin folds
Rhabdomyolysis (muscle breakdown)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muscle pain • Dark urine or reduced urine output • Weakness

First Aid

- Take the affected worker to a cooler area (e.g., shade or air conditioning).
- Cool the worker immediately. Use active cooling techniques such as:
 - Immerse the worker in cold water or an ice bath. Create the ice bath by placing all of the available ice into a large container with water, standard practice in sports.
 - Remove outer layers of clothing, especially heavy protective clothing.
 - Place ice or cold wet towels on the head, neck, trunk, armpits, and groin.
 - Use fans to circulate air around the worker.
- Never leave a worker with heat-related illness alone. The illness can rapidly become worse. Stay with the worker.
- If victim is vomiting, turn them over on his/her side to make sure the airway remains open.
- When in doubt, call 911!