



Understanding Heat-Related Illness -- Symptoms

What Are the Symptoms of Heat-Related Illnesses?

Heat cramp symptoms can include:

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

Heat exhaustion symptoms can include:

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

Heat exhaustion requires immediate attention.

Heat stroke symptoms can include:

- Nausea and vomiting
- Headache
- Dizziness or vertigo
- Fatigue
- Hot, flushed, dry skin

- Rapid heart rate
- Dry skin
- Profound sweating
- Shortness of breath
- Decreased urination
- Blood in urine or stool
- Increased body temperature (104 degrees to 106 degrees F)
- Confusion, delirium, or loss of consciousness
- Convulsions

Heat stroke can occur suddenly, without any symptoms of heat exhaustion. If a person is experiencing any symptoms of heat exhaustion or heat stroke, **GET MEDICAL CARE IMMEDIATELY**. Any delay could be fatal. 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 degrees to 106 degrees F
- 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

WebMD Medical Reference | Reviewed by Sabrina Felson, MD on July 21, 2017

Sources 

SOURCES:

The American Red Cross.

American Academy of Family Physicians.

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