



What Are Heat Illnesses & How Do You Treat Them?

Heat illnesses are serious medical conditions that occur when our bodies can't cool down naturally, or when we don't (or aren't able to) help them stay cool in high temperatures. There are **3 main heat illnesses: heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke.**

Any heat illness is preventable! But if not treated, heat cramps can turn into heat exhaustion, heat exhaustion can turn into heat stroke, and heat stroke can be fatal.

HEAT CRAMPS

Heat cramps are the mildest of the heat illnesses. They can happen when a person sweats a lot while working or exercising in high heat. Sweating causes the body to lose salt and water. Low levels of salt in the muscles can cause painful cramps.

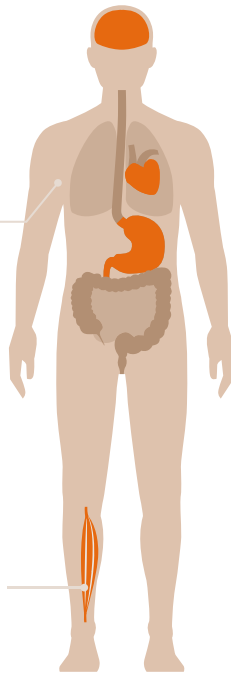
Symptoms:



HEAVY SWEATING



PAINFUL MUSCLE CRAMPS OR SPASMS



Treatment: If someone is having heat cramps, here's what they should do:

- Stop activity for a few hours
- Move to a cooler location
- Drink cool water, clear juice, or a sports drink
- Call the doctor if the cramps don't go away within one hour

HEAT EXHAUSTION

Heat exhaustion is a moderate heat illness. It happens when the body overheats and starts to have a hard time cooling down. Often the person is dehydrated, meaning that they were sweating a lot in high heat without drinking enough fluids to replace the loss of salt and water from the body.

Symptoms:



TIREDFNESS OR WEAKNESS



DIZZINESS, HEADACHE



FAINTING OR PASSING OUT



HEAVY SWEATING



FAST, WEAK PULSE



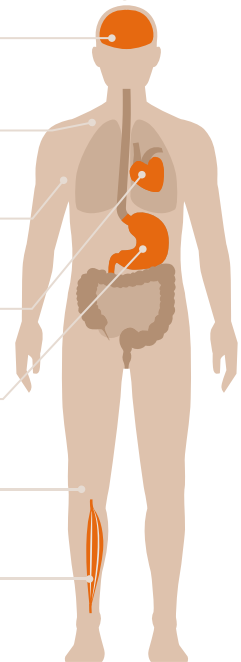
NAUSEA OR VOMITING



COLD, PALE & CLAMMY SKIN



MUSCLE CRAMPS, TINGLING, OR NUMBNESS



Treatment: If someone is having heat exhaustion, here's what they should do:

- Go someplace cooler (e.g., air-conditioning or shade)
- Sip cool water, clear juice, or a sports drink
- Take a cool shower or bath, or apply a cool wet cloth to the body
- Change into loose, light-weight clothes
- Lay down

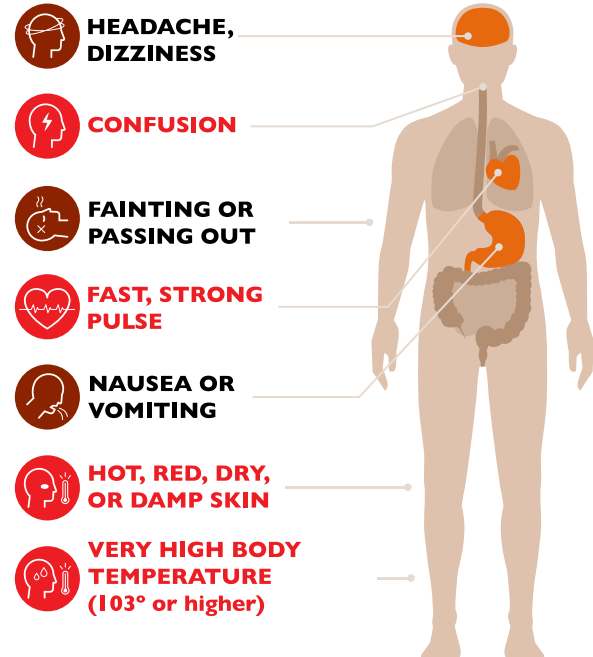
Call the doctor if:

- Symptoms get worse or last more than one hour
- The person has heart problems or high blood pressure

HEAT STROKE

Heat stroke is the most severe heat illness. It happens when the temperature inside the body becomes too high and the body can't cool down. Heat stroke can cause permanent disability or death.

Symptoms:



Treatment: Heat stroke is a **MEDICAL EMERGENCY**. If someone is having heat stroke, they will need help. Here's what you should do:

Call 911 right away. Then take these steps in order:

1. Reduce body temperature
 - Wrap them in a cool, damp towel
 - Put them in a cool bath
 - Spray them lightly with cool hose water
2. Move them to a cooler place
3. Do not give them anything to drink
4. If they are vomiting, turn them on their side to keep their airway open