

First Aid for Heat Illness

When a heat illness is occurring, every second counts. Symptoms can worsen quickly so it is important to provide aid promptly. Being familiar with how to treat heat illnesses will allow you to respond quickly.

① Heat Rash

Symptoms

- Clusters of red bumps, often on areas of sweating like the neck, upper chest, or in the folds of the skin

First Aid

- Stay in a cool, dry place
- Keep the rash dry
- Use baby powder to soothe the rash

② Exercise-Induced Muscle Cramps

Symptoms

- Muscle spasms that are forceful and painful, stiffness, visible bulging knots in the muscle, and possible soreness that occur suddenly with no warning

First Aid

- Rest in a cool, shaded area
- Stretch the affected muscle
- Hydrate with water or beverages that have electrolytes, such as Gatorade

③ Heat Syncope/Fainting

Symptoms

- Fainting, dizziness, weakness, weak pulse, tunnel vision, pale or sweaty skin, loss of consciousness

First Aid

- Move the individual to shade, sit or lie them down when symptoms occur
- Elevate legs to promote blood returning to the heart
- Sit or lie down as soon as the individual begins to feel symptoms
- Rehydrate with water or a sports beverage



④ Heat Exhaustion

Symptoms

- Fatigue, nausea, fainting, weakness, vomiting, dizziness, paleness, chills, diarrhea, irritability, headache, decreased muscle coordination

First Aid

- Rest in a cool, shaded area
- Hydrate with water or other beverages with electrolytes
- Cool the person with ice packs, air conditioning, or a fan
- Help the person stop their work for the day
- Call for help if needed

⑤ Heat Stroke

Symptoms

- Confusion, altered consciousness, bizarre behavior, staggering, irritative or combative behavior
- Can occur suddenly, without warning, and progress quickly

First Aid

- Call 911 at once. It's a medical emergency
- Aggressively cool the body to reduce core body temperature as quickly as possible with whole-body cold-water immersion in a water and ice tub
- If that is not available, use ice towels or cold compresses and cover as much of their body as possible
 - Rotate towels or cold compresses often (every 1-3 minutes) to ensure the body is being continuously cooled
- Do not leave a person with heat stroke alone

