



# Heat Related Emergencies



## The first step is always prevention:

- Wear loose-fitting, light-weight clothing in hot weather
- Rest frequently
- Stay inside if possible
- Drink lots of fluids (avoid caffeine or alcohol)
- Listen to the news and weather for heat advisories

## Rice EMS

**713-348-6000**

or any blue-light phone  
24 hours a day

### Heat Stroke

Heat stroke is the most serious type of heat-related emergency. It is LIFE-THREATENING and requires IMMEDIATE and AGGRESSIVE treatment!

*Definition:* Heat stroke occurs when the body's heat regulating mechanisms fail. Body temperature rises so high that brain damage and death may result unless the body is cooled quickly.

#### *Signs and Symptoms:*

- Skin is HOT, RED, DRY.
- Pupils are constricted (very small)
- Body temperature is VERY HIGH (sometimes as high as 105°)

#### *First Aid:*

1. Call EMS immediately.
2. Move the victim to a cool location out of the heat.
3. Place victim in a tub of cool water, wrap in wet sheets, and place in an air-conditioned room.
4. DO NOT give ANYTHING by mouth!

### Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is less dangerous than heat stroke, but it can progress to heat stroke if left untreated.

*Definition:* Heat exhaustion is caused by fluid loss which, in turn, causes blood flow to decrease to vital organs, resulting in a form of shock. As a result of dehydration, victims often complain of flu-like symptoms hours after exposure.

#### *Signs and Symptoms:*

- Skin is COOL, PALE, MOIST
- Pupils are dilated (very large)
- Body temperature near normal
- Heavy sweating
- Headache
- Nausea, dizziness, or vomiting

#### *First Aid:*

1. Call EMS immediately.
2. Move the victim to a cool location out of the heat.
3. Lay victim on back and raise feet 10-12 inches
4. Remove/loosen clothing
5. Cool victim by fanning or applying cold packs, wet sheets or towels
6. If conscious give 1/2 glass water every 15 minutes.

### Heat Cramps

Occurs especially during outdoor games.

*Definition:* muscular pain and spasms due to heavy exertion. Generally thought to be caused by loss of water and salt through sweating.

#### *Signs and Symptoms:*

- Abdominal cramps or muscle spasms
- Leg cramps or muscle spasms

#### *First Aid:*

1. Move victim to a cool location.
2. If conscious, give 1/2 glass of water every 15 minutes.

#### DO NOT:

- Underestimate the seriousness of heat related emergencies, especially for children or the elderly
- Give medications to reduce fever (i.e. Aspirin); they may cause further harm
- Give victims salt tablets
- Overlook possible complications from other medical problems
- Give victims liquids containing alcohol or caffeine—they interfere with the body's ability to control temperature
- Give the victim ANYTHING by mouth if heat stroke is suspected.