

## HAZARDS AND THREATS

### EXTREME HEAT – SYMPTOMS,

### FIRST AID AND HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES

Symptoms of Dehydration and Heat Cramps include the following:

- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Faintness
- Headaches
- Muscle Cramps
- Increased Thirst

Individuals with these symptoms should be moved to a cooler, shaded place and given water or sports drinks. More severe symptoms such as diminished judgment, disorientation, pale and clammy skin, a rapid and weak pulse, and/or fast and shallow breathing may indicate heat exhaustion or impending heat stroke and requires immediate medical attention.

The following are some suggestions in what you can do to protect yourself against Extreme Heat conditions:

- Drink plenty of water regularly and often, even if you do not feel thirsty. Attempt to stay hydrated. Person who have epilepsy; heart, kidney or liver disease; are on fluid-restricted diets; or have a problem with fluid retention should consult a doctor before increasing liquid intake.
- Drink water or electrolyte-replacing sports drinks often (do not wait until you are thirsty) and avoid drinking sweetened drinks, caffeine and alcohol.
- Offer help to those in your neighborhood with limited access to air conditioning and transportation, such as seniors, people who are ill or who have disability access and functional needs. Check on them frequently or take them to a location with air conditioning.
- Never leave children or pets alone in closed vehicles.
- Stay indoors as much as possible and limit exposure to the sun. Consider spending the warmest part of the day in a public building such as libraries, schools, movie theaters, shopping malls, and other community facilities.

- Cover windows that receive morning or afternoon sun with drapes, shades, awnings or louvers.
- Stay on the lowest floor out of the sunshine if air conditioning is not available.
- Eat well-balanced, light and regular meals. Avoid using salt tablets unless directed to do so by a physician.
- Dress in loose-fitting, lightweight and light colored clothes that cover as much skin as possible.
- Protect face and head by wearing a wide-brimmed hat.
- Avoid unnecessary exertion, such as vigorous exercise during peak sun hours, if you are outside or in a non-air conditioned building.
- Avoid strenuous work during the warmest part of the day. Use a buddy system when working in Extreme Heat and take frequent breaks.
- Slow down and avoid strenuous activities.
- Remember to put on Sun Screen
- Remember to wear your Sunglasses

## **HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES**

### **Heat Cramps**

### **Heat Exhaustion**

### **Heat Stroke (Most Severe Heat-Related Illness)**

#### **Heat Cramps:**

- Symptoms include muscular pains and spasms, usually in the stomach, arms and leg muscles.
- Usually results from heavy exertion, such as exercise during Extreme Heat.

- Although heat cramps are the least severe of all heat-related problems, they are usually the first signal that the body is having trouble coping with hot temperatures. Heat cramps should be treated immediately with rest, fluids and getting out of the heat.
- Seek medical attention if pain is severe or nausea occurs.

### **Heat Exhaustion:**

Symptoms include the following:

- Heavy Sweating
- Pale and clammy moist skin
- Extreme weakness or fatigue
- Muscle cramps
- Headaches
- Dizziness or Confusion
- Nausea or Vomiting
- Fast and Shallow Breathing
- Fainting

### **First Aid for Heat Exhaustion:**

- Rest in a Cool Area
- Sipping of Water or a Sports Drink
- Applying Cool and Wet Cloths
- Elevating the feet 12 inches

**NOTE:** If left untreated, victim may go into heat stroke. Seek medical attention if the person does not respond to the above basic treatment.

**Heat Stroke:**

Symptoms include the following:

- Flushed, Hot, Dry Skin (No Sweating)
- High Body Temperature above 103F
- Confusion or Dizziness
- Unconsciousness
- Throbbing Headache
- Rapid or Strong Pulse

**NOTE:** Heat Stroke is the most severe heat-related illness and occurs when a person's temperature control system, which produces sweat, stops working. Heat Stroke may lead to brain damage and death.

First Aid for Heat Stroke:

- Call 9-1-1
- Move Victim to a Cool Shaded Area
- Fan the Body
- Spray the Body with Water

Information provided by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

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