

Environmental-Heat Related

Your health and safety are very important to us. Because of the large number of people with the flu, hospitals and emergency rooms are very busy. As a result, we are closely evaluating who we can take in the ambulance to the hospital.

We have evaluated that you do not need to go in the ambulance to the hospital at this time. Paramedics are giving you this sheet to help you care for yourself at home.

You can get medical care at a clinic, urgent care center or an emergency room. If you decide to do so, you will need to get to these places on your own. Remember hospitals are seeing a lot of patients with the flu. If you go to a hospital you risk getting infected with the flu.

Heat Related Illness

Normal body temperature is around 98°F. A healthy body temperature is maintained by the nervous system. As your temperature rises, your body tries to maintain its normal temperature by transferring heat. It accomplishes this by sweating and increasing blood flow to the skin. Your body can only accomplish this for so long. When your body is no longer able to cool itself, a heat related illness occurs.

Causes of Heat Related Illness

- Hot environments
- Inside a parked car especially with the windows up
- In small, confined warm spaces with poor ventilation
- Overdressing for the environment

Signs of Heat Related Illness/Heat exhaustion

- Muscle cramps
- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Headache
- Confusion and or anxiety
- Excessive thirst
- Dizziness
- Excessive sweating, often accompanied by cold and clammy skin.

If left untreated, symptoms can become more severe and progress into Heat Stroke.

Signs of Heat Stroke – A Life Threatening Emergency

Heat Stroke can occur suddenly, without any symptoms of heat exhaustion. You should seek immediate emergency medical evaluation if you develop any of the following symptoms:

- **Confusion, anxiety or loss of consciousness**
- **Very rapid or slow heart rate**
- **Rapid rise in body temperature (104 degrees Fahrenheit or higher)**
- **Either drenching sweats accompanied by cold, clammy skin, or if you notice a marked decrease in sweating accompanied by hot, flushed, dry skin**
- **Convulsions**

Things you should do to prevent Heat Related Illnesses:

- Drink more fluids regardless of your activity. Do not wait until you are thirsty. If your doctor normally limits the amount of fluid you drink because of a medical condition, you should call your doctor to see how much fluid you should be drinking when the weather is hot.
- Do not drink alcohol or liquids containing large amounts of sugar. These can actually cause dehydration.
- Stay indoors if it is hot outside. If possible stay in an air conditioned place. If you do not have air conditioning, try going to a public place that has air conditioning. Even a few hours spent in air conditioning can help your body stay cooler.
- Electric fans can provide comfort. If possible, spray your self with water with a spray bottle or washcloth. The fan then will help in the cooling process by evaporation. This is a major way your body cools itself.
- Try taking a cool shower or bath.
- Wear light weight, loose fitting clothing.
- **Never leave anyone in a closed, parked vehicle when it is warm out.**
- **Although anyone can suffer a heat related illness, some people are at greater risk. Those at greater risk are:**
 - Infants and younger children
 - People aged 65 or older
 - People who have mental illness
 - Those who are physically ill, especially those with heart disease
 - Patients taking medications that interfere with sweating

This information is to help you care for a person who has a heat related illness.

The evaluation and/or treatment by the paramedics today are not to replace the recommendation of a doctor.

You can get medical care by a doctor on your own.

You should call 911 for any medical symptom, concerns that happen after we leave today.



These Home Care Instructions are for use during specified times of severe pandemic influenza, courtesy of the Metro Region EMS System, Metro Emergency Services Board, 2099 W. University Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55014-3431