

Body temperature may range from below to slightly above normal and is not, therefore a good indicator of heat exhaustion. The key features that differentiate heat exhaustion from heat stroke are sweating of the skin and normal or slightly elevated body temperature.

Treatment for Heat Exhaustion

- Place the person in a cool atmosphere.
- If there has been excessive sweating, diarrhea or vomiting, give water to drink (if able to swallow).
- Persons who do not recover quickly and those who lose consciousness should receive immediate medical aid, i.e. hospitalization.

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke is a **MEDICAL EMERGENCY**. It occurs in conditions of high temperature and dry winds or high humidity and poor air circulation. The condition may be accompanied by headache and vomiting, and unconsciousness may come on quickly.

Other indications of heat stroke are:

- A flushed face with hot dry skin
- A body temperature in the 40°C (104°F) range
- A full, pounding rapid pulse
- Noisy breathing
- Convulsions in young persons



Treatment For Heat Stroke

THE AIM OF FIRST AID IS TO REDUCE THE BODY TEMPERATURE IMMEDIATELY. This maybe done as follows:

- Transfer person to a shady area.
- Remove clothing and sponge the person's body with cool water or in cold wet sheets or towels. Place wet towels packed with ice on neck, chest, back, armpits, groin.
- Fan the body surface.
- When the body temperature is lowered to 38°C (101°F) or slightly above normal, cover the person with a dry sheet.
- Maintain a cool atmosphere.
- Obtain medical aid – call ambulance for **immediate transport** to hospital.

If doubt exists about whether the person has heat exhaustion or heat stroke, treat the person as a medical emergency.

Public Health Division
Environmental Public Health Services

Sun Sense



Public Health Division
Environmental Public Health Services

For more information, please contact your nearest Environmental Public Health Services office.

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Capital Health Centre - South Tower	(780) 735-1400
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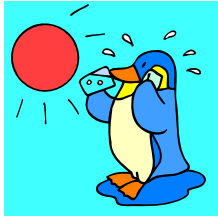


Capital Health
EDMONTON AREA

Summer days (or daze?)

With the approach of summer, people are out in the sun to a greater extent and can run the risk of sunburn, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. A disturbing fact is that the protective ozone layer around the earth may be diminishing, allow more damaging ultraviolet rays to penetrate. Excessive exposure to the sun has also been related to the development of various types of skin cancer and has also been linked to aging of the skin. As most of an individual's lifetime exposure may occur during childhood, early protection from "the summer sun" is desirable. Use of sunscreens and proper clothing will decrease the risk. In addition, ultraviolet rays are also thought to play an important role in some eye disorders, such as cataract and other visual problems. Hence, eye protection with sunglasses is important.

As always **PREVENTION IS BETTER THAN THE CURE!**



- (1) "Beware of mid-day sun. "Avoid exposure between 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- (2) Drink plenty of water in hot weather to be sure of an adequate fluid intake.
- (3) Use a sunscreen which permits tanning while providing some protection against burning. Tanning products are now rated with numbers called Protection Factors (PF). The higher the numbers, the more

protection they offer. People who burn should select one with a PF of 14 – 17. It should be applied half an hour before going out in the sun and reapplied after swimming.

- (4) Use sunhats and T-shirts on infants and toddlers

Sunburn

Direct exposure of the skin to the April-September sun's rays may produce itching, burning and redness or even superficial burns before the skin receive a gradual protective tan. If the heat has been excessive, as at midday, swelling and blistering of the skin may occur even after a short exposure.

Sunburn may also occur in conditions of sun on ice or snow or desert sand, when the severity is increased by the reflection of ultra-violet radiation from these surfaces such as a lake.

Sunburn is prevented by careful, very gradual, short exposure of the skin to the sun. Not more than five minutes exposure should be allowed on the first day. Additional preventative measures include protective clothing and topical sunscreens.

Treatment For Sunburn

- Remove person from the sun.
- Rest in the shade; use cool compresses to reduce skin heat.
- Apply skin lotions available by prescription or commercially prepared.
- Seek medical aid if sunburn is severe.

The general rules for treatment of burns and scalds apply in case of sunburn. Immersion in cool water gives a soothing effect. CAUTION – swimming in water exposed to the sun does not prevent sunburn.



Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion may be caused by sustained exposure to excessive heat, especially moist heat or by loss of water and salt from excessive sweating and may occur with or without physical exertion. The condition may be accompanied by vomiting and diarrhea. Heat exhaustion due to water loss increases the risk of heat stroke. Things to watch for:

- Excessive sweating followed by cessation of sweating
- Headache, dizziness and at times abdominal cramps
- Fatigue, weakness and restlessness
- Intense thirst
- Facial pallor and cold, clammy skin with goose bumps
- Weak pulse
- Rapid and shallow breathing
- Fainting caused by movement or gradual impairment of consciousness