



HEAT STRESS

You probably know how draining working or playing in too much heat can be. But if the heat and humidity are very high, there is a danger of heat cramps, heat exhaustion, or heat stroke. This is most likely to occur when the temperature is 90° F or more. First aid for heat cramps and exhaustion can make the person much more comfortable, and able to return to normal activities more quickly.

Causes of Heat Stress

You know that as your body moves, you get warmer. Perspiring is one of the ways your body has of cooling off. Your body also directs more of your blood to the surface of the skin, which is why your skin may look flushed when you're hot. Sometimes your body gets too hot. This is called heat stress. You may be working too hard, or not drinking enough water when it is very hot or humid. You may not be used to working in the heat. Or, the air may be very still, with no breeze or fan to help cool you. When your body overheats, it begins to pay most of its attention to cooling off. But other jobs your body must do may not get done, and you can have symptoms of heat stress.

First Aid For Heat Cramps

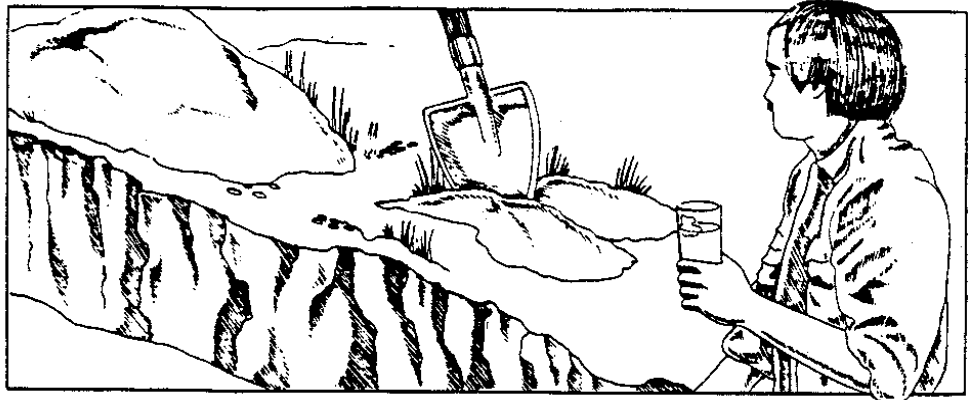
If you're working or playing hard in the heat, you can get cramps, pains, or spasms. Often they are in your arms, legs, or abdomen. You will probably be perspiring heavily. You can also get heat cramps from drinking too many cold liquids, or

by drinking them too quickly.

Massage or use firm pressure on the muscle that is cramping. Drink small sips of water with a little salt added (if you have a heart or blood pressure problem, drink plain water) to help cool your body. Move into the shade or a cooler (not cold) place.

Avoiding Heat Stress

It takes about 4-7 days to get used to unusual heat. If you know you'll be exposed to hot temperatures, spend more time each day in the heat for about a week before beginning your task. Always drink plenty of cool



Rest and drink cool water often when you are working in hot, humid weather.

First Aid For Heat Exhaustion

People with heat exhaustion have some or all of the following symptoms: sweating, clammy, flushed, or pale skin, dizziness, weakness, nausea, rapid and shallow breathing, headache, vomiting, or fainting.

Those with heat exhaustion should lie down in a cooler (not cold) place, with feet raised and tight clothing loosened. Give them sips of cool water, adding 1 teaspoon of salt per quart of water. (If they have heart or blood pressure problems, give plain water.) Call a doctor, especially if there is vomiting or fainting.

water when you're in the heat. You may not be thirsty, but your body can still be losing as much as three gallons of water a day in hot weather. Wear hats, sunglasses, and loose cotton fabrics to help you stay cool. Take frequent breaks in a cool place.

Know About Heat Stress

Too much heat can make people lose their concentration, get tired, or grouchy. Understanding how to deal with heat stress can help you avoid accidents and misunderstandings. Extreme heat can be bad for your health, so learning first aid for heat stress can be important to your health and well-being.