



# ARE YOU READY FOR SUMMER EXERCISE?

As the weather quickly transitions into summer, **it's important to know the safety guidelines** for exercising out of doors. Humidity can be life-threatening for individuals with heart disease. Even in temperatures that do not seem extreme, when humidity is above 70%, the incidence of complications such as dehydration, fatigue and heat-related illnesses are elevated. Humidity and heat make it difficult for the body to release heat because sweat does not evaporate as quickly—hence the recommendation is to choose the coolest times of the day to exercise out doors and or to stay inside when the temperature is above 80 degrees and the humidity is high.

**Avoidance or prevention of heat exhaustion and heat stroke is extremely important** at this time of year. Individuals with heart disease who may have reduced heart functioning as well as the elderly and babies are at the greatest risk for a heat stroke. **Heat stroke** is a true medical emergency that can be fatal if not properly and promptly treated.

**Do you know the signs and symptoms of heat stroke/exhaustion? Do you know what to do?**

Signs and symptoms usually appear when dehydration starts. Muscle cramps caused by loss of salt from heavy sweating may happen first. **Heat exhaustion** occurs when water and minerals in the blood drop too low or too fast. Without treatment, heat stroke may follow and happen very rapidly. One or more of the following may occur:

- Body temperature between 37 to 40 degrees C. (98.6 to 104 degrees F.)
- Flushed and very dry skin or sweaty and cold, clammy skin.
- Headache, strange behavior, hallucinations, agitation, confusion, or trouble staying awake.
- Muscle weakness and twitching or a feeling of pins and needles on the skin.
- Nausea, vomiting or abdominal cramps.
- Seizures or coma.

**If you think someone is having heat stroke/exhaustion, you should:**

- Move the person to a cool, shaded area and turn him on his side.
- Check for breathing and a pulse. Start rescue breathing and CPR if needed. Have someone call 911 immediately for medical assistance.
- If the person is awake and cold water is available, drench him with the water. You may also wrap him with water-soaked sheets. This may drop his body temperature rapidly. Give him cold liquids if he is able to drink.
- Remove his clothing and start fanning or spraying luke-warm water.
- Apply ice packs on the neck, armpits, and groin.
- Do not give antipyretics.

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