



# HEAT RELATED EMERGENCIES



## Escambia County, Florida - ALS/BLS Medical Protocol

---

Hyperthermia occurs when the patient is exposed to increased environmental temperature and can manifest as heat cramps, heat exhaustion, or heat stroke.

Heat Cramps signs and symptoms include: muscle cramps of the fingers, arms, legs, or abdomen, hot sweaty skin, weakness, dizziness, tachycardia, normal BP, and normal temperature.

Heat Exhaustion signs and symptoms include: cold and clammy skin, profuse sweating, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, tachycardia, weakness, dizziness, transient syncope, muscle cramps, headache, positive orthostatic vital signs, normal or slightly elevated temperature.

Heat Stroke signs and symptoms include: hot dry skin (sweating may be present), confusion and disorientation, rapid bounding pulse followed by slow weak pulse, hypotension with low or absent diastolic reading, rapid and shallow respirations (which may later slow), seizures, coma, elevated temperature above 105 degrees F.

### *Heat Cramps and Heat Exhaustion*

#### Supportive Care

1. [Trauma Supportive Care Protocol](#).
2. Remove from warm environment and cool patient.
3. Monitor temperature.
4. For mild to moderate heat cramps and heat exhaustion, **if patient is conscious and alert**, encourage patient to drink salt containing fluids. (e.g. half-strength Gatorade or 10K ).

#### ALS Level 1


1. If heat cramps are severe or patient's level of consciousness is



Approved: 10/01/2011  
Version: 3.1

Page 1 of 2

Approved by:

  
Charles Neal, D.O. Medical Director



# HEAT RELATED EMERGENCIES



## Escambia County, Florida - ALS/BLS Medical Protocol

---

diminished, administer fluid challenge of Normal Saline 250-500 ml IV.

### ALS Level 2 (*Physician Authorization Required*)

None

### *Heat Stroke*

#### Supportive Care

1. [Trauma Supportive Care Protocol](#).
2. Remove from warm environment and aggressively cool patient. Remove patient's clothing and wet patient directly with ice water. Also, turn A/C and fans on high and apply ice packs to head, neck, chest and groin.
3. Monitor temperature. Cool patient to 102 degrees F, then dry patient, remove ice packs, and turn off fans (avoid lowering temperature too much).

#### ALS Level 1

1. Treat hypotension (systolic BP <90mmHg) with IV fluids. Avoid using vasopressors and anticholinergic drugs (may potentiate heat stroke by inhibiting sweating). Administer fluid challenge of Normal Saline 500 ml IV.

### ALS Level 2 (*Physician Authorization Required*)


None



Approved: 10/01/2011  
Version: 3.1

Page 2 of 2

Approved by:

  
Charles Neal, D.O. Medical Director