



HEAT RELATED EMERGENCIES



Escambia County, Florida – 1st Responder Medical Protocol

Hyperthermia occurs when the patient is exposed to increased environmental temperatures 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.

ASSESSMENT

A. ABC's (See [General Supportive Care Protocol](#)).

B. Initial Assessment


1. Body temperature
2. Skin:
 - Hot and dry?



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- Hot and moist?
- Cool and clammy?
- 3. Level of consciousness
- 4. Vitals

TREATMENT

A. Heat Cramps

1. **Causes:** Hot weather, prolonged sun exposure, strenuous exercise
2. **Symptoms:** Muscle cramps (common to legs and abdomen)
3. **Treatment:**
 - Move patient to cool surroundings, out of sun.
 - Ok, if patient wishes to self administers oral fluids.
 - Avoid giving salt tablets or any form of salt.
 - Do not allow anything by mouth if patient is nauseated, vomiting or does not have an intact gag reflex.

B. Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke


1. **Symptoms:** moist clammy skin, weakness/dizziness, headaches, nausea, fainting, normal or subnormal temperature.
2. **Treatment:**
 - Give patient oxygen as indicated in the [General Supportive Care Protocol](#).
 - Move patient out of sun, or hot area.



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- Loosen all clothing
- Cool patient as rapidly as possible with rotating ice packs to the chest wall, armpits, and groin. Also, mist with cold tap water.
- Monitor patient's vitals and level of consciousness. Note any changes.
- If seizures present see protocol.

REPORT


A. Report to crew as indicated in [*General Supportive Care Protocol*](#).



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