

# Treatment for Heat-Related Illnesses

## What should I do if I have heat cramps?

(Muscle pains or spasms)

If medical attention is not necessary, take the following steps:

- Stop all activity and rest in a cool place.
- Drink water, clear juice or a sports beverage.
- Do not return to strenuous activity for a few hours after the cramps subside because further exertion may lead to heat exhaustion or heat stroke.
- Seek medical attention for heat cramps if they do not subside in 1 hour.

## What steps can be taken to cool the body during heat exhaustion?

(Heavy sweating, paleness, cramps, weakness, headache or nausea)

- Drink cool, nonalcoholic beverages.
- Rest.
- Take a cool shower, bath, or sponge bath.
- Seek an air-conditioned environment.
- Remove restrictive clothing, equipment, and helmets.

## What should I do if I see someone with any of the warning signs of heat stroke?

(High body temp., strong pulse, hot and dry or moist skin, headache, nausea, unconsciousness)

If you see any of these signs, you may be dealing with a life-threatening emergency. Have someone seek immediate medical attention while you begin cooling the victim. Do the following:

- Get the victim to a shady area.
- Cool the victim rapidly, using whatever methods you can. For example, immerse the victim in a tub of cool water; place the person in a cool shower; spray the victim with cool water from a garden hose; sponge the person with cool water; apply icebags at the neck, armpit, and groin area; or if the humidity is low, wrap the victim in a cool, wet sheet and fan him or her vigorously.
- Monitor body temperature\* and continue cooling efforts until the core body temperature drops to 101-102°F.
- If emergency medical personnel are delayed, call the hospital emergency room for further instructions.
- If the victim is alert, give him or her sips of cool water to drink—do not give alcohol.

\*Temperature taken rectally is the most accurate method.

