

# FIRST AID FOR

# *heat*

# RELATED ILLNESSES

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*View the original guide:*  
<http://bit.ly/safe-heat-guide>

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# DEHYDRATION

**Seek medical advice if symptoms don't improve or are severe**

## Symptoms

- Mild to severe thirst (remember that thirst is satisfied before fluid loss is fully replaced).
- Dry lips and tongue.
- Slowed mental function and lowered performance.
- Reduced or dark urine output.

## First aid for dehydration

- Drink water. Avoid caffeinated, carbonated and alcoholic drinks, and salt tablets.
- Loosen tight clothing and remove unnecessary clothing, including PPE.
- In cases of extreme heat or dehydration, replace electrolytes.

# HEAT RASH

## Symptoms

- Itchy rash with small raised red spots on the face, neck, back, chest or thighs.

## First aid for heat rash

- Move to a cooler, less humid environment.
- Keep the affected area dry and remove unnecessary clothing, including PPE.
- Apply a cold compress.

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**Seek medical advice if symptoms don't improve or are severe**

# HEAT CRAMPS

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**Seek medical advice if  
symptoms don't improve  
or are severe**

## Symptoms

- Painful and often incapacitating cramps in muscles, particularly when undertaking demanding physical work.

## First aid for heat cramps

- Stop activity and rest quietly in a cool place until recovered.
- Drink an electrolyte solution.

# FAINTING

Seek medical advice

## Symptoms

- Fainting (heat syncope) can occur while standing or rising from a sitting position.

## First aid for fainting

- Lie the worker flat immediately with their legs slightly raised.
- Do not raise the head.
- Treat as for heat exhaustion.

# Symptoms

## Not all symptoms will be present

- Dehydration, thirst, and reduced or dark urine output.
- Sweating.
- Elevated body temperature.
- Weakness or fatigue.
- Headaches and dizziness.
- Nausea.
- Muscle cramps.
- Severe symptoms:
- The worker stops sweating.
- Cold, pale or clammy skin.
- Clumsiness or slower reaction times.
- Disorientation or impaired judgement.
- Rapid or short breathing.
- Rapid weak pulse or heart palpitations.
- Tingling or numbness in fingers or toes.
- Visual disturbance.
- Vomiting or an unwillingness to drink.

# First aid for heat exhaustion

- Move the worker to a cool place with circulating air.
- Lie the worker flat.
- Remove unnecessary clothing, including PPE.
- Loosen tight clothing.
- If the worker is fully conscious sit them up to facilitate drinking and provide cool – not cold – fluid to drink.
- Provide an electrolyte solution or water.
- Cool the worker with cold compresses or apply cold water to skin.
- Observe the worker and obtain medical advice if symptoms don't improve.
- Seek medical assistance if there is no improvement or the first aider is in doubt.

# HEAT EXHAUSTION

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**CALL AN AMBULANCE  
IMMEDIATELY**

# Symptoms

**Not all symptoms will be present**

- The person stops sweating.
- Skin can be pink, warm and dry, or cool and blue.
- High body temperature above 39 degrees Celsius.
- Cramps.
- Pounding, rapid pulse.
- Headache, dizziness and visual disturbances.
- Nausea and/or vomiting.
- Clumsiness or slower reaction times.
- Disorientation or impaired judgement.
- Irritability and mental confusion.
- Collapse, seizures and unconsciousness.
- Cardiac arrest. Can be characterised by unconsciousness, stopped breathing and no pulse



**HEAT STROKE**

**CALL AN AMBULANCE  
IMMEDIATELY**

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## First aid for heat stroke

- Call 000 and evacuate by ambulance immediately.
- Ensure that the ambulance is updated if the worker experiences seizures or becomes unconscious.
- If cardiac arrest occurs follow DRSABCD action plan
- Move the worker to a cool place with circulating air.
- Remove unnecessary clothing, including PPE
- Loosen tight clothing.
- Cool the worker by splashing room temperature water on their skin or sponging their skin with a damp cloth.
- Make a wind tunnel by suspending sheets around, not on, the worker's body. Use a fan to direct gentle airflow over the worker's body.



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# HEAT STROKE

**CALL AN AMBULANCE  
IMMEDIATELY**

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- Apply cold packs or wrapped ice to the worker's neck, groin and armpits.
- If the worker is fully conscious sit them up to facilitate drinking and provide cool – not cold – fluid to drink.
- Provide an electrolyte solution with sugar. Do not attempt to give oral fluid if the worker is not fully conscious.
- Shivering is an automatic muscular reaction which warms the body. It will make the body temperature rise even further. If the worker starts shivering, stop cooling immediately and cover them until they stop. Once they have stopped recommence first aid treatment.