

Heat Exhaustion

Symptoms

If you are experiencing new, severe, or persistent symptoms, contact a health care provider.

Symptoms include:

- Clammy skin
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Muscle cramps
- Extreme thirst
- Excessive sweating (hyperhidrosis)
- Dehydration
- Fainting
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Weakness
- Decreased urine output

Causes

- Heat exhaustion is caused by exposure to high temperatures.
- Salt depletion is caused by not just replenishing water losses, but also failing to restore salt loss in the body
- Water depletion is caused by taking insufficient fluids during the Heat exposure
- It can also be caused by failure of the body to cool itself
- Other causes include:
 - Alcohol intake
 - Strenuous physical exercise
- Risk factors include:
 - Age- children < 5 years and the elderly
 - Obesity
 - Drugs, e.g., diuretics
 - High heat index
- Wearing dark clothes, wearing sports gear such as padded or insulated clothing, helmets and hats in a hot weather

Prevention

- Loosen the clothes or wear loose fitting clothes
- Drink plenty of fluids and stay hydrated
- While doing a strenuous exercise, stop and rest
- Using sunscreen, SPF >15
- Do not leave children in enclosed spaces, e.g., a car when it's hot
- Stay indoors and move to air conditioned spaces in case of extreme heat

Complications

Sudden heatstroke may lead to brain damage and eventually death.