

## MODESTO FIRE DEPARTMENT

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## FIRE PREVENTION DIVISION

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*"We Care"*

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## **HEAT RELATED ILLNESS SAFETY BASICS**

### What is heat exhaustion?

Heat exhaustion happens when your body gets too hot. It can be caused by exercise or hot weather. You may feel weak, dizzy, or worried. You also may have a headache or a fast heartbeat. You may get dehydrated and have very little urine.

### What should I do if I think I have heat exhaustion?

If you think you may have heat exhaustion, get out of the heat quickly. Rest in a cool, shady place and drink plenty of water or other fluids. Do NOT drink alcohol. Alcohol can make heat exhaustion worse. If you do not feel better within 30 minutes, you should see your doctor. If heat exhaustion is not treated, you can get heatstroke.

### What is heatstroke?

Heatstroke is much more serious than heat exhaustion and can kill you. People with heatstroke may seem confused. They may have seizures or go into a coma. Most people with heatstroke also have a fever. Heatstroke can happen when your body gets too hot, or it can happen after heat exhaustion.

### What should I do if I think someone has heatstroke?

If you think someone might have heatstroke, you should take him or her to a cool, shady place quickly, and call a doctor. Removing the person's unnecessary clothing and bathing or spraying the person's skin with cool water can help cool him or her down. Try to fan warm air over the person while wetting the skin with lukewarm water. The evaporation of the water will speed cooling.

### The following checklist can help you recognize the symptoms of heat-related illnesses:

1. **Heat Rash:** Heat rash looks like a red cluster of pimples or small blisters.
2. **Heat cramps:** Symptoms are painful muscle spasms in the arms, legs, or abdomen
3. **Heat syncope (fainting):** Symptoms of heat syncope or fainting are
4. **Heat exhaustion** is a warning that the body is getting too hot.
5. **Heat stroke** is a serious, life-threatening condition that occurs when the body loses its ability to control its temperature.

### How to prevent heat illness:

1. Drink plenty of non-caffeinated fluids (caffeinated drinks can contribute to and accelerate dehydration).
2. Wear light-colored, loose fitting clothing.
3. Do not participate in heavy activity outdoors during the hottest hours of the day.
4. Go indoors to a cooled area immediately whenever you feel overheated.