

# Exercise smart: PREVENT HEAT STROKE

Exercising outdoors is a great way to get some fresh air and improve your health. But on the hottest days of the summer, be sure you don't overdo it. Heat stroke can happen to anyone, even trained athletes, and can be life-threatening.

## How it happens

Being out in hot temperatures, especially while exercising or doing any physical activity, can cause heat stroke. The body loses its ability to control its own temperature, and it keeps rising to unsafe levels. This can damage the brain, heart, and other organs.



## Warning signs

Before heat stroke happens, you may notice warning signs of heat illness. This is the body's way of saying it needs to cool down right away. They include:

- Muscle cramps
- Feeling very thirsty
- Feeling very tired
- Dizziness
- Weakness
- Headache
- Nausea and vomiting
- Skin feels moist and cool

If you notice any of these signs, get the person out of the heat right away. Find shade, apply cool cloths to the head, and use a fan or ice packs to cool the person down. Giving a sports drink is best, but water will do if you don't have a sports drink. If the person isn't improving quickly, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

## Signs of heat stroke

Heat stroke is ALWAYS an emergency.  
If you notice any of these signs, seek emergency care immediately.



Fever over 102 degrees



Fainting or unconsciousness



A rapid pulse or rapid breathing



Confusion or seizures



Skin that looks red, feels very hot

## Preventing heat stroke

Preventing heat stroke is possible.  
Be smart about the summer sun with these tips:

- Drink plenty of fluids when you're out in the heat.
- Wear clothing that fits loosely and is lightweight.
- Seek shade or go inside during the hottest hours of the day.
- Don't leave people or pets in parked cars, even with the windows down.
- Exercise indoors on days when there is a heat advisory, or anytime it feels too hot and humid.
- Keep the very old or very young out of the heat as much as possible.
- Wear sunscreen. A sunburn can make your body overheat.

*Anytime you feel too hot, it's time to go inside for a cool down. Don't try to push through it. Exercise is best done indoors on hot days. Heat stroke isn't worth the risk!*