

HYPERTHERMIA/HEAT ILLNESS

- Routine Medical Care
- Protect patient from environment.
- If the patient is in extremis, begin treatment prior to secondary survey.
- Consider: the environment, patient age, and preexisting conditions

1. SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A HEAT EMERGENCY

- Weakness or exhaustion
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Sweating may or may not be present
- Fainting or feeling faint
- Rapid heart rate
- Muscle cramps
- Altered mental status (coma, seizures, delirium)

2. PREEXISTING CONDITIONS THAT CAN CONTRIBUTE TO A HEAT EMERGENCY:

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| ▶ Psychiatric disorder (both because of the medications taken and perhaps the patient's poor judgement) | ▶ Fever |
| ▶ Heart disease | ▶ Fatigue |
| ▶ Diabetes | ▶ Obesity |
| ▶ Alcohol | ▶ Dehydration (either decreased fluid intake or sweating) |
| | ▶ Medications |

3. TREATMENT:

3.1 If the patient is conscious:

- 3.1.1 Remove patient from hot environment
- 3.1.2 Loosen or remove clothing
- 3.1.3 Place in supine position with legs elevated
- 3.1.4 Administer O₂
- 3.1.5 Fan the patient
- 3.1.6 Water may be given if patient is alert, has a gag reflex and is not nauseated.

3.2 If altered mental status is present: (see above)

- 3.2.1 Place on left side, and monitor airway
- 3.2.2 Wet the skin and fan aggressively
- 3.2.3 Apply cold packs to the axillae, groin and neck. (if available)
- 3.2.4 Administer IV fluid challenge (250-500 mL NS)
- 3.2.5 Transport immediately