

Heat Disorders



1. Sunburn

- See school handout 'Sun Smart'

2. Prickly Heat

An irritating rash of tiny blisters, usually caused by constant sweating in a hot climate.

Treatment:

- Get out of the hot sun
- Rest

3. Heat Syncope

Unacclimatised people exposed to heat.

Symptoms:

- Acute fatigue
- Fainting
- Feeling of giddiness

Treatment:

- Rest

4. Heat Exhaustion

Cause:

Water depletion

Symptoms:

In descending order of systems as you might expect to encounter them.

- Thirst
- Fatigue
- Giddiness
- Rapid pulse (bounding pulse)
- Raised body temperature
- Low urine output
- Delirium
- Coma
- Death

Treatment:

- Re-establish water balance

5. Heat Stroke

Mistakenly referred to as 'Sunstroke'

This is the failure of the body's temperature regulating system & is very serious.

Symptoms:

- Very high body temperature
- Absence of sweating
- Skin hot & dry to the touch
- Early symptoms very similar to hypothermia:
 - Aggressive behaviour
 - Lack of co-ordination
 - Etc
- Coma or convulsions
- Death



Treatment:

- Sponging down or covering with wet towels
- Vigorous fanning
- Immersion in a cold 10°C (is the treatment of choice)

6. Precautions for all Heat conditions

- Keep fit, this is very important
- Do the minimum of work to achieve your objectives
- Try to keep out of the Sun
- Drink more than you need.
'Little & Often' is the best maxim
- Thirst is a POOR indicator of your actual requirement.
- A high calorie diet, low on protein, is desirable.
- Clothing:
 - loose
 - lightweight
 - permeable to sweat
 - light in colour
 - Shady hat
 - Sun glasses
 - Never labour uphill in hot conditions in waterproof clothing
- If Salt tablets are taken, dilute 1.5mg with 1lt of water
- A home-made Isotonic drink can be a good idea, if you remember to clean your Platypus out after use. I store my clean Platypus, empty in the deepfreeze.
 - 1/3 fill with pure fruit juice of your choice, top up with water & a small pinch of salt.
- Drink plenty when you get home after the walk 1lt +