

# **Urgent News Release #4**

## **Richland County Health and Human Services Public Health**

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### **HEAT STROKE AND HEAT EXHAUSTION**

*Richland Center, WI:* The high temperatures we have been experiencing over the last few days increases the risk of heat-related illnesses, especially for those who are sensitive to the heat, such as young children and the elderly.

#### **What is heat stroke?**

Heat stroke is the most serious heat-related illness. It occurs when the body becomes unable to control its temperature: the body's temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails, and the body is unable to cool down. Body temperature may rise to 106°F or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not provided.

#### **What are the warning signs of a heat stroke?**

Warning signs of heat stroke vary but may include the following:

- An extremely high body temperature (above 103°F)
- Red, hot, and dry skin (no sweating)
- Rapid, strong pulse
- Throbbing headache

-More-

## **HEAT STROKE AND HEAT EXHAUSTION CONT.**

- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Confusion
- Unconsciousness

### **What is heat exhaustion?**

Heat exhaustion is a milder form of heat-related illness that can develop after several days of exposure to high temperatures and inadequate or unbalanced replacement of fluids. Those most prone to heat exhaustion are elderly people, those with high blood pressure, and those working or exercising in a hot environment.

### **What are the warning signs of heat exhaustion?**

The warning signs of heat exhaustion include the following:

- Heavy sweating
- Paleness
- Muscle cramps
- Tiredness
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fainting

-More-

## **HEAT STROKE AND HEAT EXHAUSTION CONT.**

The skin may be cool and moist. The pulse rate will be fast and weak, and breathing will be fast and shallow. If heat exhaustion is untreated, it may progress to heat stroke. See medical attention if symptoms worsen or last longer than one hour.

### **What steps can be taken to cool the body during heat exhaustion?**

- Drink cool, nonalcoholic beverages.
- Rest.
- Take a cool shower, bath, or sponge bath.
- Seek an air-conditioned environment.
- Wear lightweight clothing.

For up to date information, visit the Richland County website at [co.richland.wi.us](http://co.richland.wi.us).

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