

Heat exhaustion and heatstroke - NHS

Symptoms of heat exhaustion and heatstroke

Symptoms of heat exhaustion

The symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

- tiredness
- dizziness
- headache
- feeling sick (nausea) or being sick (vomiting)
- excessive sweating and skin becoming pale and clammy (a change in skin colour can be harder to see on brown or black skin)
- cramps in the arms, legs and stomach
- a high temperature
- being very thirsty
- feeling irritable

The symptoms of heat exhaustion are often the same in adults and children.

If someone is showing signs of heat exhaustion they need to be cooled down and given fluids.

Symptoms of heatstroke

The symptoms of heatstroke include:

- a very high temperature
- hot skin without sweating
- fast breathing and a fast heartbeat
- confusion and restlessness
- seizure (fit)
- loss of consciousness

Heatstroke is a medical emergency. Get immediate medical help if someone has the symptoms of heatstroke.

Things you can do to cool someone down

If someone has heat exhaustion, follow these 4 steps:

1. Move them to a cool place.
2. Remove all unnecessary clothing like a jacket or socks.
3. Give them plenty of water to drink – you can also give them an isotonic sports drink or oral rehydration powder that you mix with water, which will help replace salt lost through sweating.
4. Cool their skin – spray or sponge them with cool water and fan them. Cold packs, wrapped in a cloth and put under the armpits or on the neck are good too.

Stay with them until they're better.

They should start to cool down and feel better within 30 minutes