

KC Knight's Youth Sports

Symptoms of Heat Stroke

The hallmark symptom of heat stroke is a core body temperature above **104 degrees** Fahrenheit. But fainting may be the first sign. Other symptoms may include:

- Throbbing [headache](#)
- [Dizziness](#) and light-headedness
- Lack of [sweating](#) despite the heat
- Red, hot, and [dry skin](#)
- Muscle [weakness](#) or [cramps](#)
- [Nausea and vomiting](#)
- Rapid heartbeat, which may be either strong or weak
- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Behavioral changes such as confusion, disorientation, or staggering
- Seizures
- Unconsciousness

Preventing Heat Stroke

Prevent a heat stroke by taking these steps:

- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing, and a wide-brimmed hat.
- Use a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or more.
- Drink extra fluids. To prevent dehydration, it's generally recommended to drink at least eight glasses of water, fruit juice, or vegetable juice per day. Because heat-related illness also can result from salt depletion, it may be advisable to substitute an electrolyte-rich sports drink for water during periods of extreme heat and humidity.
- Take additional precautions when exercising or working outdoors. The general recommendation is to drink 24 ounces of fluid two hours before exercise, and consider adding another 8 ounces of water or sports drink right before exercise. During exercise, you should consume another 8 ounces of water every 20 minutes, even if you don't feel thirsty.

Avoid fluids containing caffeine because it can make you lose more fluids and worsen heat-related illness. Also, do not take salt tablets unless your doctor has told you to do so. The easiest and safest way to replace salt and other electrolytes during heat waves is to drink sports beverages or fruit juice.

Protocol for Heat Stroke

First Aid for Heat Stroke

Call 911

If you suspect that someone has a heat stroke, immediately call 911 or transport the person to a hospital. Any delay seeking medical help can be fatal.

While waiting for the paramedics to arrive, initiate **first aid**. Move the person to an air-conditioned environment CAR-- or at least a cool, shady area -- and remove any unnecessary clothing.

If possible, take the person's core body temperature and initiate first aid to cool it to 101 to 102 degrees Fahrenheit. (If no thermometers are available, don't hesitate to initiate first aid.)

Try these cooling strategies:

- Fan air over the patient while wetting his or her **skin** with water from a sponge.
- Apply ice to the player armpits, groin, neck, and back.
Because these areas are rich with **blood** vessels close to the skin, cooling them may reduce body temperature.
- Immerse the patient in a tub of cool water.