

Heat stroke (HYPERPYREXIA) is an immediate life-threatening problem caused by an accumulation of body heat and a disturbance of the sweating mechanism. It results in generalized cellular damage to the central nervous system, liver, kidneys and the clotting mechanism. In simpler terms, your body has become so overheated it cannot adapt. Signs of a person suffering from heat stroke would be very flush with skin hot and dry, no sweating.

Therapy. Remove all clothing and rapidly cool by continuous sponging on the bare skin with cool water or immerse the victim in cool water (do not add ice) until the temperature is sufficiently lowered. Carefully avoid shivering as this produces heat. Administer oxygen if available and transport to nearest medical facility or call 911.

Prevention. Be advised of the following precautions:

1. During exercise cool off, rest and drink fluids. Do not exercise in heavyweight clothing.
2. During hot spells and when the humidity index exceeds 87 degrees Fahrenheit, reduce activity.
3. During hot weather, never leave a child alone in a car with inadequate ventilation. Ensure adequate hydration on car trips in hot weather.
4. During hot weather, slowly acclimate the body to the increased heat by gradually increasing periods of work or exercise.
5. During illnesses, avoid heavy activity.