

Hot Weather Exercise

You should take special care when the weather gets hot. Start your special care when it gets hotter than 80 degrees. If there is high humidity (75 to 80 percent), that can cause problems. It can cause you to overheat. So, take extra care when it is both hot and humid. Extra care is needed most if you:

- Are very young
- Are very old
- Have high blood pressure
- Have coronary artery disease
- Have any other kind of heart disease.

There are two major dangers from the heat. Your body can lose too much water (dehydration). And, your body can get too hot, or overheated. Water lost in sweat comes out of your bloodstream. You need to replace the water so your blood won't get thicker. Thick blood puts more strain on your heart as it tries to pump blood to your arms and legs. This makes it hard to get blood and oxygen to your muscles. These changes can lead to heat exhaustion. Here are some signs of heat exhaustion. You may feel tired, dizzy, short of breath, or have pale skin. Heat exhaustion can come on quickly. It can come on in just 30 minutes if you're sweating a lot.

The answer: Stay well hydrated at all times. Drink at least a pint of water before your workout. Keep drinking water while you work out. Have some more water after you stop. Pure water will get to your bloodstream before sugared drinks. Carry a water bottle with you if there is no water near you. Drink even if you do not feel thirsty. Your body does not always tell you how much water you've lost. Even if you're not thirsty, you may have lost a lot of water.

Heat stroke is a less common, but even more of a danger. Heat stroke is when you make so much heat that your body can no longer get rid of it. Your body can no longer cool itself down. This causes your body temp to go way up. Heat stroke can come on in just a few minutes if you work out very hard. Having enough water does not always stop heat stroke. Heat stroke is

urgent. You need to go straight to the hospital if you have heat stroke. If not treated right away, it can be fatal. Watch out for some signs of heat stroke. If you feel confused or faint while exercising you need to get help. You should go to a hospital or call an ambulance for help.

Here is the answer to heat stroke. Take more care if you exercise when it is very hot (80 degrees) or humid (90 degrees). Don't work out too hard; keep it easy and steady. Avoid working out more than 10 minutes at a time. The worst thing to do is a 3-mile running race on a hot day. The run would make your body work too hard. It would also make your body get too overheated; you would be unsafe.

Tips for hot weather exercise

- There is an easy way to tell if you are dehydrated. Check the color of your urine. It should be pale yellow. If it's darker than that, you need to drink at least a pint of water.
- The amount you sweat does not tell you if you are dehydrated. Different climates cause you to sweat more or less. In a dry climate, you can actually sweat more than in a humid one. It may not feel like you are sweating as much. Here is the reason; your sweat evaporates much faster in a dry climate.
- In hot weather, choose proper clothes. Light colored, porous clothes are best. They get rid of sweat easily. Your clothes need to be wet for sweat to fully evaporate. Avoid changing into a dry shirt.
- Drink water or a sports drink as often as possible. You can also drink fruit juice. If you do, mix it half-and-half with water. This will avoid an upset stomach.
- What if you move from a cool place to a hotter one? Allow your body many weeks to get used to the new place. What will happen? During that time, your bloodstream will gain water. This lets you sweat with less danger. Also, your rate of sweating will increase. This helps you cool off more efficiently.
- Take extra care in very hot weather. Work out when it is cooler. Early in the day or late evening is best. Or work out indoors.

*****Authored by Johns Hopkins University and Johns Hopkins Health System*****