



Charlie Crist
Governor

Ana M. Viamonte Ros, M.D., M.P.H.
State Surgeon General

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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Health officials ask residents to know the signs of heat exhaustion
- Weather Service forecasts severe heat for Thursday and Friday

PENSACOLA -- Following National Weather Service reports of heat index values from 100-105 degrees on Thursday and Friday, health officials urge residents to know the warning signs of 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 who are most vulnerable to heat exhaustion are elderly people, people with high blood pressure and people working or exercising in a hot environment.

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

- Heavy sweating
- Paleness
- Muscle cramps
- Tiredness
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fainting
- Skin: may be cool and moist
- Pulse rate: fast and weak
- Breathing: fast and shallow

If heat exhaustion is untreated, it may progress to heat stroke. Seek medical attention immediately if any of the following occurs:

- Symptoms are severe.
- The victim has heart problems or high blood pressure.

Otherwise, help the victim to cool off using the steps suggested below and seek medical attention if symptoms worsen or last longer than one hour.

If heat exhaustion is suspected, cooling measures that may be effective include the following:

- Drink cool, nonalcoholic beverages, as directed by your physician
- Rest in an air-conditioned environment
- Take a cool shower, bath or sponge bath
- Wear lightweight clothing
- Prevent sun burn by wearing a sunscreen of at least SPF 30. Sun burn damages the skin's ability to release heat and thereby cool off the body.

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