

Center for Sexual & Reproductive Health



- Chronic Pelvic Pain
- Fertility
- Endometriosis
- Pregnancy/Post-Partum
- Sexual Dysfunction
- General Wellness

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Pelvis Wellness

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Staying Safe in the Heat

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When replacing fluids, cold drinks are more effective than room temperature drinks. Liquids with electrolytes and sugar, such as sports drinks, improve the ability for water to enter the body's cells and hence promote rehydration. By contrast, plain water consumption during rapid sweat losses over an extended period of time causes an overall loss of salt from the body and can cause low sodium levels, a dangerous condition called "hyponatremia". Athletes exercising in the heat in excess of 60 minutes should consume sports drinks and water instead of just plain water.

Prevention

Education also plays a critical role in prevention of heat-related illness. Athletes, coaches, parents and athletic trainers all play an important role and, if recognized early, simple measures can be taken that may prove lifesaving. Obese athletes should be monitored more closely, as their risks are greater. It is important to pay attention to clothing and equipment that can decrease the body's ability to cool itself, such as football pads.

A universally recognized strategy to prevent heat illness is to allow athletes to build a tolerance to exercising in the heat, a process called "acclimatization." This process can take 1-2 weeks and may take slightly longer for adolescents. The athlete should be exposed to gradually increasing levels of exertion, equipment wear, and time in the heat. As summer workouts start up for football and other sports, this need for acclimatization is a crucial, though often overlooked, strategy to minimize risk of heat illnesses.

Ideally, summer football workouts should start with limited time in the heat, wearing loose fitting clothing, and without pads. Gradually, stressors should be added

so that the athlete's body can become accustomed, such as increasing the exercise intensity, or duration. Eventually, helmets might be added, and finally full pads. All athletes should be given frequent breaks, provided shade and encouraged to remove protective equipment during breaks to cool off.

Treatment

The most severe form of heat illness is heat stroke and is a life-threatening medical emergency. Emergency Medical Services (9-1-1) should be called immediately. Rapid cooling of the body in an ice bath is the gold standard of treatment. Once the athlete shows signs of heat stroke, the clock is ticking, and the athlete has a much better chance of survival if these measures are taken within 30-60 minutes. For this reason, a high index of suspicion, and adequate preparation and awareness of the condition is crucial to be able to mobilize and act appropriately when the time comes.

As the days get hotter this summer, be sure to take frequent breaks, drink plenty of electrolyte rich liquids, and call for professional help when necessary. Have fun and stay safe out there!

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Symptoms of heat exhaustion

Signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion may develop suddenly or over time, especially with prolonged periods of exercise. Possible heat exhaustion signs and symptoms include:

- Cool, moist skin with goose bumps when in the heat
- Heavy sweating
- Faintness
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Weak, rapid pulse
- Low blood pressure upon standing
- Muscle cramps
- Nausea
- Headache

Source: www.mayoclinic.com

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Dr. Roth is a Board-Certified fellowship trained orthopedic surgeon specializing in Sports Medicine and injuries that occur in active people of all ages. He sees patients out of his Oakland and Dublin offices with Webster Orthopedics. He is the Head Team Physician for Contra Costa Community College and a Consultant Team Physician for Campolindo High School. Visit him at www.KEVINROTHMD.COM or call 800-943-8099 for an appointment. Dr. Roth grew up in Moraga and currently lives in Orinda with his wife and 6-year-old twins.

~ Healthy Lifestyle ~