

TALLAHASSEE – As Floridians begin the task of recovery, health officials ask individuals to be aware of 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 most prone 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 and seek medical attention if symptoms worsen or last longer than one hour.

WHAT TO DO IF HEAT EXHAUSTION IS SUSPECTED:

Cooling measures that may be effective include the following:

- Drinking cool, nonalcoholic beverages, as directed by your physician
- Resting in an air-conditioned environment
- Taking a cool shower, bath or sponge bath
- Wearing lightweight clothing
- Preventing sun burn, which damages the skin's ability to dissipate heat by wearing sunscreen of 30 spf.

For further information, please contact your local county health department or visit www.doh.state.fl.us or www.FloridaDisaster.org.

The Florida Emergency Information Line: 1-800-342-3557

Public Information Emergency Support Function: 850-921-0384

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