

## Hyperthermia/Heat Exposure

### Aliases

Heat cramps	Heat edema	Heat exhaustion
Heat stroke	Heat syncope	Hyperthermia

### Definitions

1. **Heat Cramps:** are muscle cramps usually in the legs and abdominal wall. Patient temperature is normal
2. **Heat Exhaustion:** has both salt and water depletion usually of a gradual onset. As it progresses tachycardia, hypotension, elevated temperature, and very painful cramps occur. Symptoms of headache, nausea, and vomiting occur. Heat exhaustion can progress to heat stroke
3. **Heat Stroke:** occurs when the cooling mechanism of the body ceases due to temperature overload and/or electrolyte imbalances. Patient core temperature is usually greater than 104°F. When no thermometer is available, it is distinguished from heat exhaustion by altered level of consciousness, seizures, or coma
4. **Heat Syncope:** transient loss of consciousness with spontaneous return to normal mentation, attributable to heat exposure

### Patient Care Goals

1. Cooling and rehydration
2. Mitigate high-risk for decompensation
3. Mitigate high-risk for agitation and uncooperative behavior

### Patient Presentation

#### Inclusion Criteria

1. Heat cramps
2. Heat exhaustion
3. Heat stroke
4. Heat syncope
5. Heat edema
6. Stimulant drug abuse
7. Delirium with agitated behavior [See [Agitated or Violent Patient/Behavioral Emergency Guideline](#)]

#### Exclusion Criteria

1. Fever from infectious or inflammatory conditions
2. Malignant hyperthermia
3. Serotonin syndrome
4. Neuroleptic malignant syndrome

### Patient Management

#### Assessment

1. Patient Assessment:
  - a. Age