

Heat exhaustion is a heat-related illness that can occur after you've been exposed to high temperatures and is usually accompanied by dehydration. Galveston County is well known for summer heat and humidity often exceeding 90 degrees and 90% humidity with heat index over 100 degrees.

Your body does several things to dissipate excessive heat and lower core body temperature: 1) sweating with evaporation on the skin (high humidity hampers this); 2) increased blood flow to the skin causing flushed pink color allowing transcutaneous transfer of heat from the body; and 3) rapid and deep breathing that releases heat in exhaled air.

Working against your body's attempt to lower core temperature is your uniform, including underclothing, bullet-proof vest, and associated equipment carried on your duty belt. This essentially puts you in a personal sauna.

Please contact  
Texas City Police Department  
for additional information.

Dispatch – 409-643-5720



Robert J. Burby, Chief of Police  
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Texas City Police Department  
Texas City, Texas



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# BEAT the HEAT



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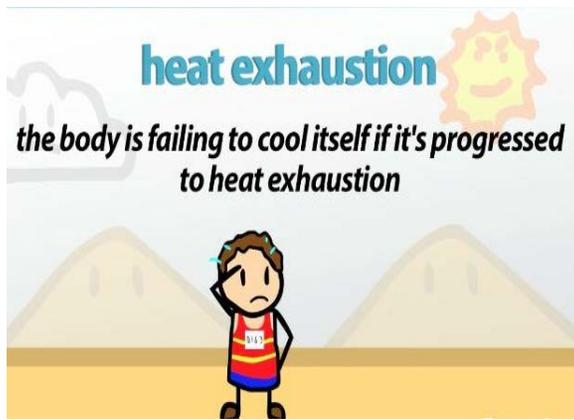
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## DEFINITIONS/SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

The two types of heat exhaustion include both “Water Depletion” and “Salt Depletion”. Water Depletion usually occurs first with symptoms of excessive thirst, weakness, headache, and even loss of consciousness. Salt depletion occurs later but overlaps with water depletion with signs of nausea/vomiting, muscle cramping, and dizziness.

Although heat exhaustion isn't as serious as heat stroke, it isn't something to be taken lightly. Without proper intervention, heat exhaustion can progress to heat stroke, which can damage the brain and other vital organs, and even cause death.

Therefore, the most common signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion include: confusion, dark-colored urine (a sign of dehydration), dizziness, fainting, fatigue, headache, muscle or abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, pale skin, profuse sweating, and rapid heartbeat

## TREATMENT

Immediately get out of the heat and rest, preferably in an air-conditioned room. If you cannot get inside, then go to the nearest cool and shaded place.

- Drink plenty of fluid (avoid caffeine and alcohol)**
- Remove any tight or unnecessary clothing**
- Take a cool shower, bath, or sponge bath**
- Apply other cooling measures such as fans or ice towels**

If such measures fail to provide relief within 15 minutes, seek emergency medical help, because untreated heat exhaustion can progress to heat stroke.

Other health conditions can make you more easily prone to heat exhaustion and include obesity, diabetes, and hypertension. Also try not to skip meals or go on a starvation diet as low blood sugar can increase risk for heat exhaustion.

## PREVENTION

- Wear your hat when out of the car to help shade your face.
- Use a sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or more. Sunburn increases risk for heat exhaustion.
- Drink extra fluids to prevent dehydration. With the high humidity and sweating that will occur, both water and salt depletion are likely to happen. Therefore, in addition to water, juices, or carbonated beverages, drink electrolyte-rich sports drinks such as Gatorade.
- Avoid excessive caffeine

- *Dr. Paul M. Fine, M.D*  
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