Heat Disorders-Brief

Heat related disorders are illnesses that are caused by continued exposure to hot and humid environments, not drinking enough fluids, and/or your body failing to regulate its own body temperature correctly.

Heat related disorders include:

- **Heatstroke**. When you cannot sweat or regulate your body temperature in an adequate way**. This is very dangerous and can be life threatening. Get emergency medical help**.
- **Heat exhaustion**. Heavy sweating and a fast heart rate, because of overheating.
- **Heat cramps**. Painful, uncontrollable muscle spasms. Can occur during heavy exercise in hot environments.
- **Sunburn**. Skin becomes red and painful, after being out in the sun.
- **Heat rash**. Sweat ducts become blocked, which traps sweat under the skin. Causes blisters and red bumps, and may cause an itchy or tingling feeling.

Overheating can be dangerous and life-threatening. When exercising, working, or doing other activities in hot and humid environments, do the following:

- Stay in air conditioned places, as much as possible.
- Wear light-weight, light colored, loose fitting clothing.
- Drink enough water to keep your urine clear or pale yellow.
- Take added precautions when both heat and humidity are high.
- Rest often.

SYMPTOMS

- Headache.
- Nosebleed.
- Weakness.
- High temperatures.
- Muscle cramps.
- Restlessness.
- Fainting or dizziness.
- Fast breathing and shortness of breath.
- Excessive sweating. (There may be little or no sweating in late stages of heat exhaustion.)
- Rapid pulse.
- Feeling sick to your stomach. (nauseous, vomiting).
- Skin becoming cold and clammy, or excessively hot and dry.

HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- Lie down and rest in a cool or air conditioned area. Wear minimal clothing.
- Drink plenty of fluids without caffeine or lots of sugar. Avoid coffee, tea, alcohol or stimulants.
- **Do not** take salt tablets.
- Bathe or shower in cool water.
- Use a fan. Add cool or warm mist to the air, if possible.
- Monitor adults at risk at least twice a day, closely watching for signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Infants and young children require more frequent watching.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You have a hard time breathing.
- You vomit or pass blood in your stool.
- You have a seizure, feel dizzy or faint, or pass out.
- You develop severe sweating.
- Your skin is red, hot and dry (there is no sweating).
- You are making very little or no urine, or your urine turns a dark color or has blood in it.
- You are unable to keep fluids down.
- You develop chest or abdominal pain.

- You develop a throbbing headache.
- You develop nausea or confusion.

Document Released: 10/15/2010
ExitCare® Patient Information ©2011 ExitCare, LLC.