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PATIENT EDUCATION HANDOUTS

Heat exhaustion

Heat exhaustion occurs when a person cannot sweat enough to cool the body. It generally develops when a person is working or exercising in hot weather, sweats a lot, and does not drink enough liquids to replace those lost fluids. Heat exhaustion can be caused by loss of fluid ([dehydration](#)) or loss of [electrolytes](#).

Symptoms of heat exhaustion include fatigue, weakness, headache, dizziness, or nausea, and the skin is pale, cool, and moist. Mild heat exhaustion does not cause a decrease in a person's mental alertness, but it may occasionally cause fainting. Mild cases of heat exhaustion usually can be treated at home.

Moderate to severe heat exhaustion can sometimes lead to [heatstroke](#), which requires emergency treatment.

Author: Jan Nissl, RN, BS

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Medical Review: [Martin Gabica, MD - Family Medicine](#)
[H. Michael O'Connor, MD - Emergency Medicine](#)

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